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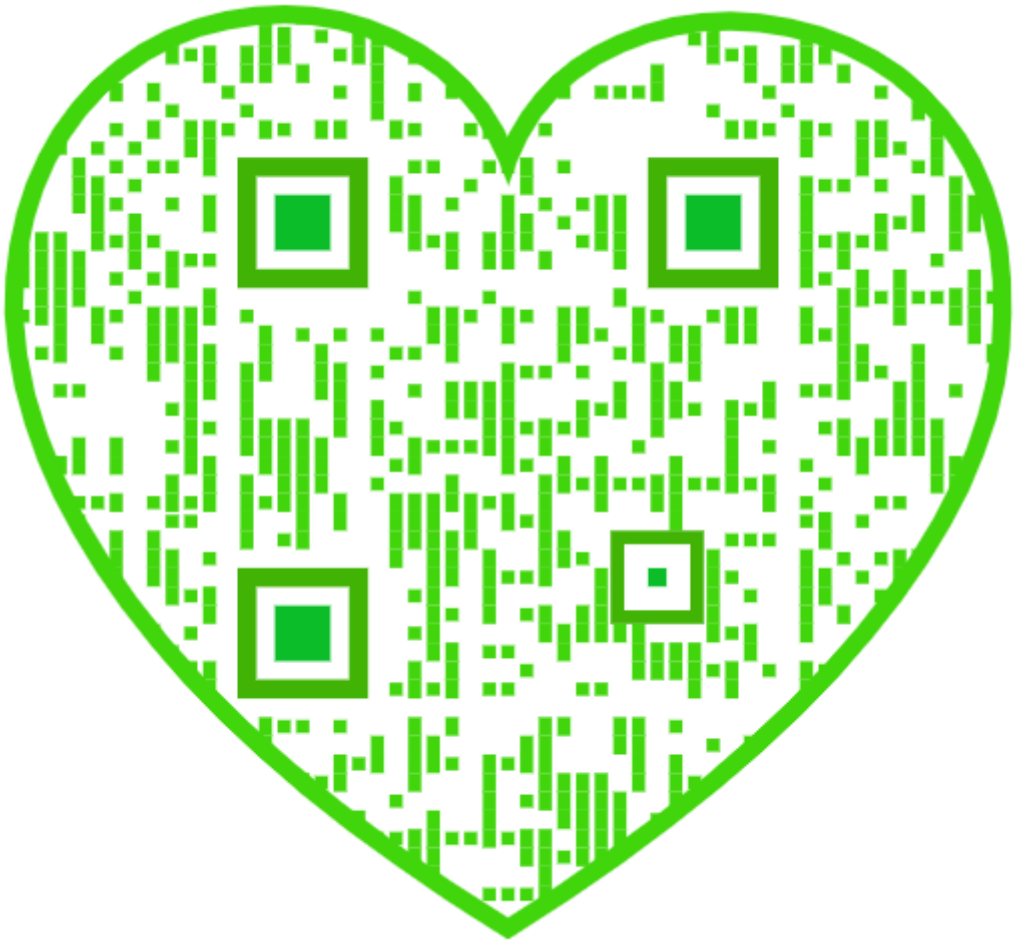
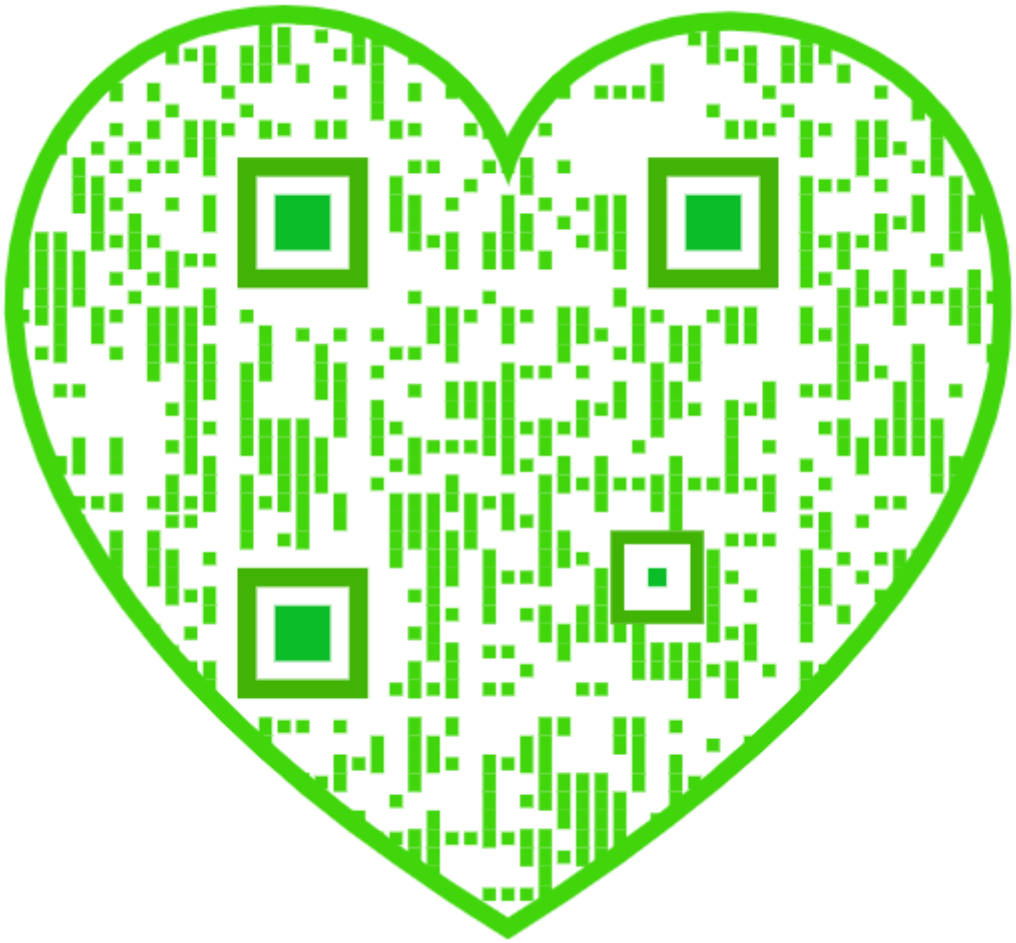
The Young Man and Journalism

Chester S. Lord





VOCATIONAL SERIES

EDITED BY

E. HERSHEY SNEATH, PH.D., LL.D., YALE UNIVERSITY

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THE YOUNG MAN AND THE LAW. SIMEON E. BALDWIN.

THE YOUNG MAN AND TEACHING. HENRY PARKS WRIGHT.

THE YOUNG MAN AND CIVIL ENGINEERING. GEORGE FILLMORE SWAIN.

THE YOUNG MAN AND JOURNALISM. CHESTER S. LORD.

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THE YOUNG MAN AND JOURNALISM

BY

CHESTER S. LORD, M.A., LL.D.

For forty-one years a member of the staff of the New York *Sun* and for thirty-three years (1880-1913) its managing editor

Sanders

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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EDITOR'S PROSPECTUS

One of the most important decisions a young man is called upon to make relates to the determination of his life-work. It is fraught with serious consequence for him. It involves the possibilities of success and failure. The social order is such that he can best realize his ends by the pursuit of a vocation. It unifies his purposes and endeavors — making them count for most in the struggle for existence and for material welfare. It furnishes steady employment at a definite task as against changeable effort and an unstable task. This makes for superior skill and greater efficiency which result in a larger gain to himself and in a more genuine contribution to the economic world.

But a man's vocation relates to a much wider sphere than the economic. It is intimately associated with the totality of his interests. It is in a very real sense the center of most of his relations in life. His intellectual interests are seriously dependent upon his vocational career. Not only does the attainment of skill and efficiency call for the acquisition of knowledge and development of judgment, but the leisure that is so essential to the pursuit of those intellectual ends which are a necessary part of his general culture is, in turn, dependent, to a considerable extent, upon the skill and efficiency that he acquires in his vocation.

Nor are his social interests less dependent upon his life-work. Men pursuing the same calling constitute in a peculiar sense a great fraternity or brotherhood bound together by common interests and aims. These condition much of his social development. His wider social relationships also are dependent, in a large measure, on the success that he attains in his chosen field of labor.

Even his moral and spiritual interests are vitally centered in his vocation. The development of will, the steadying of purpose, the unfolding of ideals, the cultivation of vocational virtues, such as industry, fidelity, order, honesty, prudence, thrift, patience, persistence, courage, self-reliance, etc.— all of this makes tremendously for his moral and spiritual development. The vocationless man, no matter to what class he belongs, suffers a great moral and spiritual disadvantage. His life lacks idealization and is therefore wanting in unity and high moralization. His changeable task, with its changeable efforts, does not afford so good an opportunity for the development of the economic and social virtues as that afforded the man who pursues a definite life-work. It lacks also that discipline — not only mental, but moral — which the attainment of vocational skill and efficiency involves.

But notwithstanding the important issues involved in a man's vocational career, little has been done in a practical or systematic way to help our college young men to a wise decision in the determination of their

life-work. Commendable efforts are being put forth in our public schools in this direction, but very little, indeed, has been done in this respect in the sphere of higher education. To any one familiar with the struggles of the average college student in his efforts to settle this weighty question for himself, the perplexities, embarrassment, and apparent helplessness are pathetic. This is due largely to his ignorance of the nature of the professions and other vocations which appeal most strongly to the college man. Consequently, he does not know how to estimate his fitness for them. He cannot advise to any extent with his father, because he represents only one vocation. Neither can he advise advantageously with his instructor for he, too, is familiar with the nature of only one profession.

For this reason, a series of books, dealing with the leading vocations, and prepared by men of large ability and experience, capable of giving wise counsel, is a *desideratum.* Such men are competent to explain the nature and divisions of the particular vocations which they represent, the personal and educational qualifications necessary for a successful pursuit of the same, the advantages and disadvantages, the difficulties and temptations, the opportunities and ideals; thus, in an adequate way, enabling the student to estimate his own fitness for them. They are also able to make valuable suggestions relating to the man's work after he enters upon his vocation.

Fortunately, in the present Series, the Editor has been able to secure the services of some of the most eminent experts in the country to prepare the respective volumes — men of large knowledge and experience, who have attained wide recognition and genuine success in their "callings." It is a pleasure to be able to place at the command of the many thousands of students in our American colleges the wise counsel of such experienced and distinguished men.

The "Vocational Series" will consist of twelve books written by representatives of different vocations, as follow:

1. The Young Man and the Law
   Hon. Simeon E. Baldwin, LL.D., Professor of Law, Emeritus, Yale University, ex-Governor and ex-Chief Justice of Connecticut
2. The Young Man and the Ministry
   Rev. Charles R. Brown, D.D., LL.D., Dean of the Divinity School, Yale University.
3. The Young Man and Teaching
   Professor Henry Parks Wright, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor Emeritus and formerly Dean of Yale College
4. The Young Man and Medicine
   Lewellys F. Barker, M.D., LL.D., Professor of Medicine and Chief Physician, Johns Hopkins University
5. The Young Man and Journalism
   Chester Sanders Lord, M.A., LL.D., formerly Managing Editor New York *Sun*

6. The Young Man and Banking
   Hon. Frank A. Vanderlip, M.A., LL.D., formerly President of the City National Bank, New York
7. The Young Man and Business
8. The Young Man and Mechanical Engineering
   Lester P. Breckenridge, M.A., Eng.D., Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University
9. The Young Man and Electrical Engineering
   Charles F. Scott, Sc.D., Eng.D., Professor of Electrical Engineering, Sheffield Scientific School, Yale University
10. The Young Man and Civil Engineering
    George F. Swain, LL.D., Professor of Civil Engineering, Harvard University
11. The Young Man and Farming
    L. H. Bailey, M.S., LL.D., formerly Director of College of Agriculture, Cornell University, and Editor of Cyclopedia of American Horticulture, Rural Science Series, Garden Craft Series, Rural Text-Book Series, Cyclopedia of Agriculture, etc.
12. The Young Man and Government Service
    Hon. William Howard Taft, D.C.L., LL.D., ex-President of the United States, and Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court

E. Hershey Sneath.

BY WAY OF EXPLANATION

The sole object of the following chapters is to tell a young man what is likely to happen to him if he goes into the newspaper business.

Many young men think of entering journalism, but journalism is to them a maze of mystery. What does it offer as a profession or a vocation? they ask. What is the nature of the business? What are its rewards? Naturally enough they continue to wonder what kind of preparatory study is desirable. How does a young man make a beginning and how does the beginner make progress? What are the recognized standards of newspaper success? How is news collected and prepared for the public? How is a newspaper conducted? What are the duties of each member of a big newspaper staff? What goes on in a newspaper office, anyway?

The book was begun with the intention of answering some of these queries, but it gradually drifted into talk about various phases and features of the business. The original intention has not been lost sight of, however. The purpose is to indicate what journalism offers to a young man as a means of livelihood. It seeks neither to glorify nor to disparage the newspaper.

The book is elementary: not intended or expected to interest or inform newspaper editors of experience.

C. S. L.

Brooklyn, New York,
Nineteen hundred and twenty two.

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THE YOUNG MAN AND JOURNALISM

THE YOUNG MAN AND JOURNALISM

CHAPTER I

BEGINNING IN NEWSPAPER WORK—THE REPORTER'S FIRST EXPERIENCES—UNPLEASANT TASKS

THE beginner in newspaper work usually starts as a reporter of the simplest and most unimportant kind of routine news. The city editor tells him what to do and how to do it. The start is made easy for him. The prevailing supposition that reporters go out into the streets and hunt for news is far from fact. They do so in the small cities but not for big newspapers.

Newsgathering has become vastly systematized. Nineteen twentieths of the news comes through established channels of information and this explains why nearly all newspapers have the same facts. The sources of information are known in all newspaper offices. If a man falls dead in the street, or a fire starts in an important building, or an automobile crushes a child, or anything unusual happens in any street, it is known to every city editor within a few

minutes; for a policeman reports it to police headquarters immediately, and reporters grab it. Similarly, shipping news is sent to the ship-news office; cases of sudden or unexplained death must be made public by official physicians; public parades and demonstrations are anticipated through the permit bureau, and so on. All day and all night this kind of news pours in to the city editor. With almost instant judgment he decides on its news value, discards it or hustles a reporter for the details. The new man gets the least important of this kind of work.

The city editor keeps a future book—like milady's engagement calendar—in which under proper date he records the events to be of that day: business meetings, conventions, adjourned cases, public dinners, everything and anything requiring the presence of a reporter. It is one of the important factors of the newsgetting system. Its proper keeping involves constant drudgery and painstaking care in the reading of newspapers for announcements or for clews to anything that is to happen. He reads, for instance, that an important business meeting has appointed a special committee to report at the next meeting; but no date of the next meeting is given. So he asks the new reporter, maybe, to ascertain and record it in the future book. The new man does many such errands, verifies many statements of fact, chases down many rumors.

In the great blizzard of March, 1888, when all transportation lines in New York City were abandoned came

the story that several funeral processions were snowed under in Greenwood cemetery. A new reporter was sent. He toiled through storm and snow waist deep to the burial place and back, a task requiring something like six hours to accomplish, and ended the day's experience by thawing out his frozen feet in a bucket of water. And what he wrote was: "The rumor that three funeral processions were snowed under in Greenwood cemetery was found on investigation to be untrue."

The city editor has many sources of information similar to those just mentioned. In the big cities he is responsible for getting the news of the urban district, a task that involves almost every kind of news-getting. This is especially true of New York City, for taken all in all nearly everything happens in New York than can happen anywhere. It is of metropolitan reporting that we are speaking just now.

The new reporter is asked to make news reports of the simplest of happenings. The narration of ordinary events is the easiest of all newspaper writing. Any intelligent high school boy can catch the knack of it and many a bright newspaper office boy has gone on to better things by absorbing that knack. It is easy to acquire because it may be largely imitative—that is, almost all routine news reports are written in the same groove of construction and in very much the same language, year in and year out, for news topics constantly repeat themselves.

By routine reports are meant accounts of public

meetings, conventions, legislative proceedings, trials in the courts, market reports, accidents, fires, suicides and petty crimes. These things are of the utmost importance to the newspapers. They constitute a large proportion of the news of the day. They are the very life of the news columns as presenting a record of the day's events. They are easy to write because they are written in the same manner day after day for they are constantly recurring. The puzzled young writer cannot go far astray if he turns back in the newspaper files to a similar meeting or accident or event and imitates that report. But let him be warned that if he continues to work in that way he becomes a routine writer, a hack reporter, and his advancement ceases.

It is in this deadly dull routine writing of routine news that we have our poorest and most slovenly newspaper results. The indifferent work done in this direction is more conspicuous in the London newspapers than in our own for there news reports have been reduced almost to formula.

We have said that the dates of fixed events to come are accumulated in the future book—meetings of all sorts, lectures, balls, sporting contests, celebrations, ceremonials, excursions and the like, of which the number and the variety are innumerable. To each of these a reporter is sent. Usually he is told before he starts about how long an article is expected of him. But he is charged to note especially anything unusual, odd, strange, or queer that may happen or be said. And al-

ways he must report to the desk, before he begins to write, for instructions as to the exact length of his article. Often two or three reporters are sent to a big meeting, one to write the introduction, another the first half of the speaking and a third the remaining part of the proceedings. This is to save time; and often the first half has been written and is in type before the last man has quit the meeting. Likewise in cases of big disasters, big celebrations, big sporting events, six or eight men are sent, each with a definite part to cover. Each writes his part and the copy reader dovetails them together into one continuous article. Team work of this sort is common enough in big offices.

The new reporter gets his fling at all of this kind of work. If he has the genuine newspaper spirit he is fascinated by his every experience. He searches the paper eagerly for the bit he has contributed. With a glow of satisfaction he contemplates his little record of a news event standing out in clear type, and he reads it again with those shivery gusts of emotion sometimes called "the thrill of authorship."

After a time, from the writing of petty paragraphs, he finds himself contributing articles a third or a half a column in length. The older men begin to notice his work, speak to him in praise of a well-constructed sentence or a nicety of verbal expression, ask him to come along with them to the beanery for a taste of coffee and cakes before going home for the night. He begins to participate in that most helpful and stimulating thing—the comradeship of the office. He comes

daily in contact with forty or fifty men—garrulous veterans, and middle-aged marvels, and youthful geniuses who are doing all kinds of newspaper stunts from constructing ponderous editorial articles and criticisms to exploiting The Stiletto in Stanton Street or The Bludgeon on the Battery. These men are good-natured critics of each other's work and not less ready to praise than to condemn or question. They take interest in a new man of promise and help him. They read the newspapers and the periodicals, and the new books—for an intimate knowledge of contemporaneous events is essential to their progress. There are few dullards among them, few without positive opinions and a vocabulary to express them. Our young man greatly enjoys their explosive comments and their ferocious conclusions. They are so alert, so alive to everything that is going on. Their conversation is so interesting to him. The atmosphere is surcharged with good fellowship. Nobody is taking himself very seriously yet everybody is doing something in a business-like way. Somehow things are different in the newspaper office from what he had expected.

The business of reporting becomes more fascinating as the reporter, gaining in skill and in ability, achieves to higher grade work. To write of big and important events becomes his ambition. It gives him prestige among his fellows, for it is the management's testimonial of confidence in him. Not until after careful consideration does the managing editor name the men who are to report a national political convention, or

the inauguration of a president of the United States, or a great celebration. The very best members of the staff are summoned to write of such events and the assignment comes to be considered as an office reward of merit.

To do the big thing of the day is one of the prizes of the reportorial business. Indeed, it may be said of the newspaper man, that from his earliest beginnings always there is something higher to be attained until he becomes the editor in chief.

In the newspaper offices of cities of the larger size, reporters develop into desk editors, city editors, managing editors, music or dramatic or book critics, or editorial writers. Many prefer to do outside work rather than become editors or critics—prefer to write for the news columns, to mingle with the outside world and take part in its stirring events rather than face the routine and the monotony of desk work.

They are especially interested in taking an out of town commission for the investigation of a subject of wide importance—a rebellion in Mexico, an uprising against the government in Cuba, a crisis in Canadian politics, a conflict between labor and capital in Colorado, a socialistic struggle in Schenectady.

Such assignments call for thorough investigation at first hand on the spot, call for an acquaintance with the leaders of the movement that frequently becomes familiar and lasting, call for practical intimate study of the convulsion itself. Information thus gained may, after its publication in the newspaper, be used again in

magazines, in books of record or in fiction. The special writer, for instance, who spends a month with the striking miners in the Michigan copper district comes to know much about life and labor there, about the copper industry, mining methods, the relation of the price of copper to miners' wages, the smelting of ore, the transportation of the raw and the finished product and a thousand other details of the business.

The newspapers do a vast amount of this kind of work. Its proper exploitation necessitates intelligent treatment by the writer. His information forms the basis for editorial comment, not only by the editors of his own newspaper but by those of other sheets, the periodical press, magazines and reviews; and also frequently it leads to government investigation or interference or regulation. Two or three years of this kind of work give a large fund of information to the writer. It is of immeasurable service to him as long as he lives.

Likewise the man who writes for the news columns on national politics finds himself most agreeably employed. In reality he is a specialist. All of his time is required to keep apace with the kaleidoscopic changes of American political life. He must be familiar with the important politics of every state and every big city, for they have immediate relation to the politics of the nation. To that end he makes many journeys. His most valuable asset is personal acquaintance with public men—the men who make politics and political history—and the more intimate the acquaintance the more

interest and confidence he may be able to inspire. The political writer seeks to meet public men on every possible occasion, seeks to keep in touch with them and with the politics they represent.

If a conspicuous political leader in a Western state goes East it will be a part of his routine to see the political writers. With them he goes over the political situation of his region, tells them just what is going on and what is contemplated. Some of the talk is confidential, and the writer keeps the confidence. In turn the writers interest him in what they know of the politics of the East and of other states. In this way—so briefly indicated—the political writer comes to comprehend the politics of the nation. He must read all obtainable political literature and must absorb political information from any source at hand.

As said elsewhere in this book, you cannot learn politics from a textbook; you must absorb the politics of the day by a study of the events of the day, and great mental ability is required to keep apace with them. Political conclusions made to-day are upset by the events of to-morrow. The issues of one election are forgotten in the burning questions of the next. The newspapers and the periodical press are great sources of information, but greater than these is association by the newspaper writer with the men who are making politics.

The writer of national politics makes frequent trips to Washington. He goes to the national political conventions and to many of the state conventions.

He is called on to write sketches of important candidates and obituary notices of statesmen. His opinions and his information are sought by editorial writers and by public men themselves. The magazines ask him for special articles. The political managers pay him for campaign literature. The greater his experience the more his services are in demand. Not infrequently he is called into party councils or is entrusted with delicate political missions. Candidates and leaders seek his advice and his influence. Presidents, cabinet officers, senators, governors and mayors tempt him to quit newspaper writing to become their secretaries—and these places are usually stepping stones to higher public life. Several presidents of the United States have chosen newspaper writers to be their private secretaries, half of the governors of New York State, in the last thirty years, and nearly every mayor of New York City have drawn their secretaries from the ranks of newspaper writers.

Moreover writers on national politics frequently are called to the post of Washington correspondent, and here too, in yet greater degree, are these same requirements essential to success. Washington is the headquarters of national politics. Nearly every congressman is a political leader in his home district as well as in his state, and his activities and ambitions are quickened in the national capital. It is the place of all places to study political movement. The correspondent enjoys the personal acquaintance of presidents, cabinet officers, foreign diplomats, the makers

of party policies, the framers of administrative measures, and from them he comes to know what they are doing. Many state secrets are told to him in confidence; to betray that confidence is to make him *persona non grata* and to destroy the possibility of getting additional information. The supposition that the newspaper writer prints everything he hears is silly. Indeed, public men have come to know that a safe way to keep a political secret is to tell it to the newspaper correspondents with the injunction that it is not to be printed.

In addition to the gathering of political information the Washington correspondent writes of the doings of Congress. This of course involves study of public questions, the burning questions of the day. It furnishes a volume of information to the young man who is to continue his career as a journalist or who may turn to public or professional life, involving, as it does, study of engineering triumphs like the Panama canal, public improvements like the development of Western irrigation, tariff changes, taxation, national banking systems, the problems of domestic shipping and foreign commerce. The correspondent comes to know about diplomacy, the making of treaties, the relation of labor to capital, railway management, government regulation of traffic—and so on almost without limit.

The correspondent must know about these things if he is to write intelligently about them. He must be familiar with the business of the departments, must

understand the army and the navy, should know the whereabouts of every regiment and every ship of importance. He should know the name and the politics and the post of every American diplomat, should know government finances—indeed, should know everything the government does. These things constantly are recurring in new and unexpected ways and they must be treated as important news of the day.

Not less fascinating to the young reporter is his daily contact with men of affairs whom he meets in the course of his news collecting; not less interesting his intimacy with the events of the day that pulsate and inspire. His work becomes so varied. It all is so new. His experiences are so interesting; and they become the more so as he gains in experience and is asked to do higher grade work. In his book on *Newspaper Reporting* Mr. John Pendleton of London says:

> The reporter is the collector of news for the circulation of which the paper really exists. On his report of the Premier's speech the editor bases his leading article. He records the splendor of the Queen's drawing room, and the want and wretchedness of the poor. No festival is complete without him; and he turns up at every calamity. He chronicles the deeds of the hero and the crimes of the miscreant. He tells how the pulse of commerce beats in every market of the world. Science and art are beholden to his pen; and even religion itself has to thank him for some of its spread. He has become a necessity to newspaper production and no inconsiderable figure in national life.

The reporter is not sent out haphazard; he is out for a purpose and that purpose is the collection at

first hand of facts and information that are supposed to interest a multitude of readers. If they are interesting to those who read them, how much the more so to the young man who, after investigation and verification to his own satisfaction, puts his conclusions on paper!

And note, if you will, how important is the work. Since the first use of printers' type the great events of the world, the events that have moved and influenced mankind, that have made the history of the world, have been announced first of all in the newspapers. They have been proclaimed to the world not by clergymen from the pulpit, or lecturers from the platform, or orators in legislative halls, not through the medium of books or magazines or pamphlets, or by the writers of editorial articles, or by critics—but in burning type by reporters.

It seems but yesterday, that midnight hour, when a reporter burst into the working room of a morning newspaper with the exclamation: "He's got it—we are going to have the electric light in every part of every house and over every desk in this room." He had hurried from Edison's first big test of the division of the electric current: had seen a hundred electric bulbs glowing in all their fascinating brightness by electricity transmitted over wires. And the people marveled at what he wrote about it.

Within the span of my own newspaper experience, reporters have given first information to the world of the discovery and development of electric lighting, heating, cooking and propulsion; of Roentgen rays; of the

telephone; of the phonograph; of the automobile; the player piano; of the typesetting machine and the multiple page printing press; the shoe-making machine; of breech-loading guns, machine-made cartridges and diabolical explosives; of the airplane and the zeppelin; of wireless telegraphy; of steel construction in big buildings; of the marvels of construction in gigantic locomotives and steamships, in subways, and elevated railroads, bridges, and aqueducts; of bacillus treatment in medicine and the wonders of abdominal surgery; and hundreds of other developments of science. We have seen the declaration of a dozen wars and the signing of a dozen peace treaties; the announcement of the death of monarchs and the birth of princes, the assassination of rulers and the inauguration of their successors.

Some reporter has announced the discovery or the fact of every one of these things. He has been compelled to study the subject enough to write about it understandingly, and that study has brought him in contact with the men who have caused or invented it.

The reporter mingles constantly with the men who control the affairs of the world. This not only is fascinating, but it gives him confidence in himself, gives him personal address, ease of manner and of conversation, manliness of presence. It sharpens his wits. It takes away that paralyzing emotion so often felt by youth when in the presence of greatness. Nothing can be more stimulating to the intellect than association with intellectual men.

The reporter who writes of an important event usu-

ally is asked to continue on the case as long as it is of public interest. The man who wrote the narrative of the murder of White by Harry Thaw wrote of Thaw's publicities for a long time afterward. The man who reports a big labor strike is called on to report the next strike. He gets interested in the subject, makes it a study, and becomes authority on the relations between labor and capital. In this way as time goes on the reporter comes to be a sort of specialist in several topics and the knowledge thus acquired is of great value to him when he comes to editorial writing, or magazine work, or authorship of any kind, or if he goes into the law or into the public service or any other business. There is not any other employment probably in which a young man may gather so extensive a general contemporaneous knowledge as in newspaper reporting in a big city.

The speakers at a public banquet may drone on for an hour or so without saying anything or giving utterance to a sentence worth reporting and then something of supreme importance may be said. The good reporter recognizes its worth instantly; the poor one does not.

Colonel William Rockhill Nelson, who won fame as editor of the Kansas City *Star*, had this to say in an address to the students of a School of Journalism:

> There is just one point I wish to emphasize to the young men who are expecting to engage in newspaper work. That is, that the reporter is the essential man on the newspaper. He is the big toad in the puddle.

Young fellows looking forward to a newspaper career often have in mind an editorship of some sort. They want to guide and instruct public opinion. The trouble is that the public doesn't yearn to have its opinion guided and instructed. It wants to get the news and be entertained.

Consider who are making the real newspapers and magazines to-day. Not the grave and learned publicist who is giving advice on the state of the Nation from the seclusion of some hole in the wall; not the recluse with a bunch of academic theories.

It is the reporter with the nose for news. He is the only fellow who has any business around newspapers or magazines. In general his job is not to produce literature, but to do reporting.

Often a good pair of legs makes a good reporter. The newspaper man must always be on the job, always hustling, always ready to go to any inconvenience or suffer any fatigue to get the news. And above all, so far as routine reporting goes, he must be honest and accurate.

Charles Dickens, who was a reporter before he became a writer of novels, says of some of his experiences:

I have often transcribed for the printer, from shorthand notes, important public speeches in which the strictest accuracy was required, and a mistake in which would have been to a young man severely compromising, writing on the palm of my hand, by the light of a dark lantern in a post chaise and four, galloping through a wild country and through the dead of the night, at the then surprising rate of fifteen miles an hour.

The very last time I was at Exeter, I strolled into the castle yard there to identify, for the amusement of a friend, the spot on which we "took" as we used to call it, an election speech of Lord John Russell at the Devon contest, in the midst of a lively fight maintained by all the vagabonds

in that division of the country and under such a pelting rain that I remember two good-natured colleagues, who chanced to be at leisure, held a pocket handkerchief over my notebook after the fashion of a State canopy in an ecclesiastical procession.

I have worn my knees by writing on them on the old back row of the old House of Commons; and I have worn my feet by standing to write in a preposterous pen in the old House of Lords, where we used to be huddled together like so many sheep—kept in waiting, say, until the Woolsack might want restuffing.

Returning home from political meetings in the country to the waiting press in London, I do believe I have been upset in almost every description of vehicle known in this country. I have been in my time belated in miry by-roads, toward the small hours, forty or fifty miles from London, in a wheel-less carriage, with exhausted horses and drunken post boys, and have got back in time for publication, to be received with never-forgotten compliments by the late Mr. Black, coming in the broadest Scotch from the broadest of hearts I ever knew.

Of the reporter's familiarity with limitless phases of life it has been said:

The reporter of to-day has to be courageous, sharp as a hawk, mentally untiring, physically enduring. He comes in contact with everybody from monarchs to beggars, from noblemen to nobodies. He sees the tragedy and the comedy of human life, its cynicism and toadyism, its patient struggling and feverish ambition, its sham and subterfuge, its lavish wealth and deepest poverty, its good deeds and most hideous crime.

Mr. H. G. Wells says of writers that "they meet philosophers, scientific men, soldiers, artists, profes-

sional men, politicians of all sorts, the rich, and the great."

As illustrating the high place a man may make for himself while writing for the news department of a newspaper, let us quote from an editorial article in the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle:*

Of Saxon stock though of Irish birth, a Royal scholarship graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, William Crooke, for forty years of the New York *Sun's* staff as a news writer and nearly all that period in charge of the *Sun's* Brooklyn news, came to be known to every police and fire department official, to most of the clergymen and all the big politicians of either party in old Brooklyn as "Billy Crooke"; always respectfully and often affectionately regarded, trusted by every one because he never betrayed a confidence and never misrepresented any communication or interview.

Mr. Crooke, qualified by high education for the writing that analyzes and illuminates the world's happenings, and a keen incisive stylist in his reporting work, was satisfied to be a reporter. He felt to the full the dignity of what he was doing; he realized that it is news that makes a newspaper, not features and not comment. He was a newspaper-maker in the best sense. Kindliness, dry humor, accurate observation, integrity, and dignity made "Billy" what he was.

In most of the college publications one may find under the heading of Alumni Notes, an item such as this:

"'18, John F. Jenkins has accepted a position on the editorial staff of the New York *Star.*"

This means that Jenkins has got a job as a reporter. But Jenkins did not have the easy time getting it that

the paragraph in the college paper would lead one to suppose. Nor did he "accept" the post: the *Star* accepted him. Before Jenkins landed on the *Star* he visited five newspaper offices, reached the assistant city editor of two, the city editor of one. He did not get beyond the office boy guarding the portals of the others.

Jenkins left four of the offices with a definite feeling that New York was none too cordial to a budding newspaper man. But he failed to consider, because he did not know, that two or three young men visit the city room of a metropolitan newspaper every day on an errand similar to his. And he failed to realize, because he did not know, that in normal times a conservative newspaper hires about one new reporter a month.

The city editor of the *Star* happened to need a man when Jenkins called. Jenkins was a college man; that was in his favor. His manner of approach was pleasing to the man who was thinking of hiring him. If the impression was good to the city editor it would also be good to the men to whom Jenkins might be sent as a reporter. His conversation was direct and to the point. He didn't make extravagant talk about his ability; he was frank in saying that he didn't know anything about the newspaper business, but wanted to learn and was willing to work hard to make good. He would be glad to take twenty dollars a week at the start and asked only for a trial.

"All right, report to-morrow at one o'clock," said the city editor and Jenkins left the office in a daze

with a job. He had been trying for three days to get one and the interview that landed it had consumed not more than three minutes.

Jenkins got the job because he was clean, intelligent and looked like good material. He had not made the mistake of thinking that impertinent aggressiveness would impress the man who was to hire him. He had not made the mistake of failing to remove his hat when he sat down beside the city desk to make his appeal. Several men had made that mistake with the city editor of the *Star*. A man who did not know enough to remove his hat even in an office, did not have manners enough to approach many of the men to whom the *Star* would send him. Jenkins did not waste the time of the city editor on nonessentials, and it was to be presumed that he would be as businesslike with those with whom he came in contact later as a reporter. Jenkins also had personality. He acted as though he meant business and realized that newspaper work was pleasant but not play. He had no letters of recommendation and the city editor didn't ask for any. Letters are easy to get and as a rule do not count for much. Personality, such as Jenkins's, counts a lot.

The reporter must be prepared to meet the active men of the world: the men who are doing the constructive work of the world. He must have presence and address to attract their attention. Usually he is a stranger to them. His presence is unwelcome to them. Experience has attested that the college boy is better fitted for this task than any other kind of beginner.

He is familiar with the ways of society and has some notion of the public questions of the day and the vital problems of life. The green young man of uncouth appearance, of clumsy presence, of faltering, stammering speech makes a mighty poor reporter.

Many newspaper office boys become good reporters. In constant contact with the editorial force they absorb knowledge of the business. Noneducated or partly educated youths may and do become excellent reporters of routine news, but they rarely get beyond the imitative stage. In the race for higher journalistic honors the college boys easily outstrip them.

A welcome addition to the staff is the man who comes from a country newspaper. Many of the ablest of American journalists began their careers in rural offices. The country boy usually knows something of the technical side of the business. Likely enough he has learned to set type or run a typesetting machine, has lent a hand in the mailing room or the delivery department, has mastered many details that, though not essential, have given a comprehensive notion of how newspapers are made.

Nor should the young man from the country, ambitious for city experience, stay away from the city through fear of competition or through timidity. Do not be afraid. The newspaper men of the city are not smarter than those in the country. I recall the youngster from a small up-state daily who with fear and trembling accepted a chance to work a few days on trial, in a big city office, as reporter. He went

smashing around town for routine news and found the work not difficult. In a week confidence had conquered timidity. He observed the other reporters and workers and said to himself, "I can compete with these men"—and he did compete with them to his gratifying success.

Fascinating as the reporter's life may be, it nevertheless has its unpleasant moments, its many hardships. The hours of work are irregular and unlimited. Men on the big metropolitan morning newspapers report for duty at noon, one or two o'clock; those of the evening staffs at seven or eight, A.M.; and all are supposed to work as long as their services are required—not infrequently for fifteen hours. Newspaper-making is a continuous performance, especially for reporters. Frequently those employed in it suffer great discomforts through physical fatigue, lack of food and sleep, and exposure to weather conditions.

One of the court reporters of a morning newspaper in New York was finishing his work in the late evening. He had been on duty some ten hours and his work had been hard. Suddenly came the big explosion of the great munitions plant at Morgan, New Jersey, and the weary young writer was told to hustle out there. At Perth Amboy he encountered the military guard thrown out to prevent approach to the burning buildings. In his attempts to get along he was arrested six times and detained. He phoned his facts to the office and was told to stay on. He could find no place to sleep—couldn't have slept if he had—could hardly find a place to sit down even, could get nothing to eat

or drink. Explosion after explosion followed hour after hour. And when at length he reached the office he was too exhausted to write a word. So they sent him to bed for six hours and then he wrote his report.

Very many other men had a similar experience that day and night. They were in constant danger of their lives, badly fed and without rest. They were driven from place to place by the military guard, and most of them were arrested over and over again. It was one of the most trying disasters to report of which we have record.

Several reporters nearly lost their lives while crossing Great South Bay in a tempest to the scene of a shipwreck on the beach. They capsized in a sail boat and the life-saving guard barely gave rescue.

Men sent to the Johnstown flood found the town wrecked, scantily provisioned, and with no sleeping accommodations. They were compelled to stay there a week under most distressing conditions while the search for the dead continued.

The reporting of the great national political conventions requires unceasing effort for a week or more, the utmost vigil through night and day. Important committees are reaching decisions, new pacts and combinations are being formed, and the entire situation may be changing from hour to hour. There is no sleep for the unfortunate correspondent; he must be awake to the instant. The reporting of what is done in the public sessions of the convention is the least of his labors.

When a man of importance falls mortally ill a reporter is detailed to watch him—to obtain the earliest announcement of his death. The vigil is constant. In scores of instances reporters have sat on the man's doorstep waiting for him to die. This sort of work involves all the monotony of sentry duty. It is disagreeable in the extreme.

The newspaper boys are asked to do many unpleasant things. They are compelled to invade private homes and to ask agonized parents why a son or a daughter has committed suicide or has done a disgraceful act; to ask a husband whether it is true that his wife has run away with a neighbor, or ask a wife whether her husband is a fugitive from justice. The assignments that take a writer into a family that has been disgraced by one of its members are the most unpleasant, probably, of any that fall to him.

Indeed there is little of joyousness in any search for information that some one wishes to conceal. Yet every editor knows that in very many important cases to be chronicled some one is interested in concealing the real facts. The people who want their affairs screened from public gaze constitute a multitude. Diplomats are reticent. Government officers are evasive. Political plans are kept in the shadow, for publicity has ruined many a political plot. Bank officials seek to conceal defalcations. Insurance companies try to hush great losses. Society leaders wish to minimize society scandals. Usually in these cases the inquirer is lied to deliberately and calmly, or the door is slammed in his

face, or the person sought refuses to be seen, or the reporter is sent on a fool's errand elsewhere—anything to be rid of him. Some one has said that the newspaper man is asked to lie about people almost as often as he is asked to tell the truth.

To obtain exact truth always has been surrounded by difficulties. Almost every historian complains of the task of establishing the truth of history. He finds the literature of the time at variance with the facts; public documents and records absolutely contradicting one another; while the recollections and reminiscences of the oldest inhabitants are fanciful dreams. It was Talleyrand who said of a treaty that if it contained no ambiguities some should be inserted.

The young newspaper writer finds his task of telling the truth quite as difficult, not only because so many persons seek to conceal the truth but also from the well-known fact—recognized and constantly commented on in our courts of law—that two persons rarely see or hear or comprehend alike. Honest witnesses give different versions.

But the newspaper manager expects the reporter to get the exact facts, and frequently the unfortunate writer finds himself compelled to resort to trickery and all kinds of subterfuge to do so. If he fails to get the facts his advancement in the office is checked. Inquiry is made into the cause of his failure and if good reason for it appears it may be forgotten. If it is through carelessness or indolence he is discharged, and the reason for dropping him is known within

twenty-four hours in every other newspaper office in the city. It is all very unpleasant.

If the new reporter be so unfortunate as to begin his career on a dishonest or an extremely sensational sheet he may suffer an experience yet more disagreeable, for he may be asked to distort the truth deliberately. Fortunately this is not a frequent request: Very few newspapers seek to print falsehoods or ask their men to pen untruths. Much less of that sort of thing prevails than disgraced the press of twenty-five years ago; yet a few editors remain who seem to think that exaggeration and falsification attract more readers than does the truth, and they demand that all news reports be colored with spectacular embellishment. This is unpleasant as well as unprofessional. It is demoralizing to a young writer. It is disastrous to his reputation for serious, trustworthy work. Yet more serious as well as more repulsive is the necessity occasionally imposed by dishonest editors on the reporter of blackening a man's reputation or exalting the deeds of a scoundrel. But this does not happen often.

The confusion and noise of the office often annoy the young writer and lessen his ability to do himself justice. The news is usually written and handled in one large room. Twenty or thirty reporters, subeditors and office boys are doing rush work. A noisy reporter blows in, as though carried on a whirlwind, talks all the time, shouts for an office boy, calls for reference books and newspaper files and drinking water all in one breath, and keeps it going. Hurry-up telephone bells

are jingling and men are bawling through the transmitters. Typewriters resound their staccato clicking. Call bells are striking and reporters are tapping their desk tops for office boys, and the boys are tumbling over one another in response, and are darting from desk to desk with copy. Persons are coming and going all the time, talking and laughing and shuffling. The old hands are used to it; but the young man accustomed to the silence of the study room sometimes develops symptoms of insanity.

Of serious consideration, also, is the fact that morning newspaper work sadly interferes with social and home life and with a host of amusements and entertainments and pleasures enjoyed by day workers. In the big cities members of news staffs seldom dine at home. The news writers go on duty early in the afternoon if not before; the news editorial staff at six o'clock or thereabouts, all to remain until well after midnight. Dinner parties, theater parties, dancing parties—all evening social life may be enjoyed on the one day only, of the seven, known as the day off. The newspaper man toils while others play—and his night's work ends somewhat dismally by his dragging home at two o'clock in the morning, maybe through storm or sleet or tempest, to a cold, cheerless, silent, dark home—a home unattractive under these conditions despite every effort to make it otherwise.

To the hard-working man of ordinary occupation there comes a certain sense of enjoyment in the relaxation following business effort. He does not want to go

immediately and stealthily to bed. The morning-newspaper man is compelled to do so. The day worker enjoys his homecoming, his leisurely evening repast, the diversions of the few hours preceding sleep. It is the bright spot in the day. The newspaper man rolls off the editorial bench into bed.

This demoralization of home and social life constitutes a very great objection to entering the newspaper business. It affects nine-tenths of the morning-newspaper staff. If the young journalist chances to marry it imposes hardships on the young wife. Usually she begins her married life by loyally and cheerfully trying to sit up until long after midnight to greet him on his return—but not for long. The coming of children and the establishing of a home compel normal rest and other attentions, and she reluctantly ceases her long waiting vigil. Instead of greeting him with a daintily prepared bit of warm food she now puts out a plate of cold stuff left over from the day before, which he mechanically masticates or not as his mood suggests; and a little later on it is decided that he might stop at a night restaurant for a bite, if he is hungry. As she cannot go out in the evening with him she misses many of the social pleasures to which presumedly she had been accustomed and which she had expected in her new life. But most of all she misses his presence and his attentions.

CHAPTER II

THE COLLECTION OF NEWS AND THE PREPARATION OF COPY FOR THE READER

THE young man just beginning a newspaper career gets a violent shock almost immediately. He discovers that some one is revising his articles, changing his words, shortening his sentences, omitting entire paragraphs. It gives him much anxiety.

All newspaper copy is revised. Very little news or general matter is printed as written originally. It undergoes "editing" by copy readers, of whom there are twelve to twenty in the big city offices. The editorial articles are revised by the editor in chief. Other copy for the editorial page—letters to the editor, communications, verse, comments from other newspapers, and the like—is prepared by his assistants. "Editing" copy means preparing it for the compositor, putting it in the exact language in which it is to be printed.

Systematic, careful revision of all copy is necessary not alone to correct error of fact, of judgment, of good taste, but also to regulate the volume of matter. The notion that newspapers print articles "just to fill up" is as absurd as the intimation that they "print anything they can get." Every newspaper of any account

receives, daily, double to four times as much news matter as can be crowded into its columns. The news value of each article or paragraph must have quick, alert consideration. If the reporter has written half a column about an event that is worth twenty lines only of newspaper space the report must be reduced to twenty lines. If an unusual rush of news or advertising compels the order to "cut everything rigidly" it is reduced to ten lines. Just what to print and what to omit are burning questions and the quality of judgment exercised in the decision largely measures the copy reader's ability.

The men who revise news copy for morning editions get to work at about six o'clock. For convenience they group around large tables, those handling telegraph matter at one desk, the readers of city copy at another, the sporting department workers at a third, while at other desks are the cable editors, the financial and commercial and the real estate men. It is of advantage to have as many as possible of these desks in one room.

How to handle the great volume of matter that pours into the office gives the managing editor much concern. It must be done with a minimum of confusion, for confusion surely creates error and disarranges system. The edition must be put to press on the instant and always the news pages are closed at the last moment, under great stress, with all hands in a rush. The work is well systemized, but no system has yet been invented that can anticipate or provide for the unexpected event that so frequently upsets newspaper offices.

In normal times the managing editor directs how the articles of considerable importance are to be treated and likewise the city editor instructs his men how and to what length they are to write their articles. The size and the quality of the edition may be planned and carried to conclusion with comparative comfort if nothing unforeseen happens. But not infrequently big news breaks out unexpectedly that upsets all calculations and compels a change of all plans. It is the unexpected that drives the news editors frantic and adds to their labors and creates confusion and chaos in spite of everything. Let us recall the Roosevelt attempted assassination, in illustration.

Things were proceeding peacefully in the newspaper office on that evening in October, 1912, when, about nine o'clock, a telegraph flash came from Milwaukee: "Theodore Roosevelt has been shot and killed by a crazy man."

Here was the biggest news for many a day. Roosevelt was perhaps the nation's most spectacular citizen. He had been our President. He was known throughout the world. He was running for the presidency as an independent candidate against Wilson and Taft. He had split the Republican party. The election was only a few days away. The political consequences of his death were stupendous.

It is quite impossible to describe what followed in the newspaper work room. The managing editor began dictating telegraph orders:

To the Milwaukee correspondent he said: "Wire with

all haste every word you can get about Roosevelt's visit, what he has said and done since his arrival, every possible detail of the shooting, full description and history of the assassin, where he has lived, so we can run him down. Send every word he utters. Hire a dozen men to help. You can't wire too much."

To the Washington correspondent: "Wire 1500 words Roosevelt's chief acts as President, 1000 on his personal popularity and social life. Interview everybody effect of his death on the election, get White House comment, wire 1000 general effects of the news. You can't send too much."

To the Chicago correspondent: "Hurry to Milwaukee. Take two or three men with you. Find our man in the *Sentinel* office. Hire a special train if necessary. Hire some one to get all he can out of the Chicago newspaper offices."

Having wired a dozen or so such telegrams to other parts of the country the managing editor summoned the city editor and said to him: "Get your entire staff here, the men who are off to-day and all the emergency men. Put on three or four more copy readers. Find out where Mrs. Roosevelt is and have a man stay right by her: also the rest of the Colonel's family. Have four or five columns of his obituary prepared. Have interviews with a lot of prominent New York men and politicians of both parties. Have a column written on the effect on the political campaign and also a column of Roosevelt's reasons for running as an independent candidate. Send to the hotels and theaters. Don't forget

a big portrait of Roosevelt—better have pictures of the entire Roosevelt family and the Oyster Bay home. Keep everybody here until three o'clock."

To the night editor he said: "The editorial page is full of campaign stuff. Have some one go through every line of it and cut out everything intended to influence a voter against Roosevelt—everything that could be thought unseemly. You will have to leave out two or three of the articles and some of the letters to the editor. Find another editorial or two that will do, on the standing galleys. Get the full force into the composing room. Tell the stereotype men there will be no end of editions all night long—they will want full force. Tell the press room men too; the circulation will be double. Be sure to look out for any slur on Roosevelt. You must get the mail edition off on time. We can't afford to miss a mail to-night."

The foregoing indicates a part—*and only a small part*—of the preparations made for an edition announcing Colonel Roosevelt's death by assassination. Within fifteen minutes enough matter had been ordered to fill five or six newspaper pages. The entire news staff jumped into the work.

The machinery for that edition began to move promptly in the lines indicated. But in half an hour came this wire from Milwaukee: "Colonel Roosevelt is not dead but has been shot near the heart. Surgeons are making examination." And through some unexplained cause not another word came from Milwaukee for an hour and a half.

With this second announcement it was necessary to change the plan of the edition to conform to the situation that the Colonel was not dead but possibly was mortally wounded. In the hour and a half of suspense thousands of words came pouring in to the copy readers all written under belief that the attack had resulted in death and all had to be edited to fit the new situation.

Then came word that the Colonel had not been seriously hurt—slightly wounded only—and that he had started for Chicago. It was now nearly midnight and a complete overhauling of the paper was necessary. A new set of instructions had to be sent to everybody. Everything had to be reëdited. What was practically a new edition must be made with very little time in which to make it. As it was, the newspapers printed from three to five pages of matter about the attempted assassination, but they killed many columns relating to the Colonel's life, the effect of the supposed death on the campaign, appreciations by public men, and so forth. The writers and copy readers were reminded that the Colonel was still a candidate, and that a new issue had been injected into the campaign, that of martyrdom. "Better minimize the martyrdom business," was the suggestion. The copy readers did a tremendous excess of emergency work that night that went for nothing; so did the correspondents, the reporters, the printers, the telegraph operators, the directing editors—everybody who had to do with getting out the edition.

From reporting to copy reading is a natural step in the progress of the young man in journalism. Copy

reading has the advantage of fixed hours, of permanent salary, of a minimum of emergency or extra work and of permitting daily a few hours for recreation or study. It has the disadvantage of being routine work not especially interesting or inspiring, without pecuniary reward of importance (salaries are from forty to sixty-five dollars a week in big newspaper offices and as low as twenty-five dollars in small ones) and of having the attendant danger of getting a man in a rut. Every office has its veteran copy readers who for years have been content to do this work. To perform the service acceptably requires absorbing attention, unceasing vigil, a familiarity with current events, accurate judgment as to the news value of every article and a genius for detecting errors of fact, or grammar, or of any kind.

Colonel John W. Forney said:

> No man is competent to edit newspaper manuscript or reprint unless he has been an extensive and analytical reader. He should, moreover, have a quick and keen perception, as well as a retentive memory of notorious facts, of celebrated names and important dates. If he is in doubt he should never fail to consult reliable encyclopedias, technical books, pamphlets and like granaries of information and knowledge.

How does the copy reader exercise his ability? All news copy goes to the readers, telegraph copy to the telegraph desk, the city copy to the city desk and so forth. The head reader glances at each article long enough to absorb a notion of its nature and make a note of its length and passes it to one of the other

readers. This man edits it into the form in which it is to appear in the newspaper. If it is too long he reduces it by stripping it of its verbiage and unimportant facts, cutting out entire sentences and even paragraphs. Unconsciously he questions every statement made by the writer, so keen becomes his search for error. If an article on an important subject is inadequate he sends it back to the city editor for amplification or explanation. If the article is unimportant he kills it. Always he has in mind that the sheet is crowded, that there isn't room for half of what is offered. He acquires the knack of condensation, of making one word express the meaning of half a sentence. He eliminates superfluous statements and obvious explanations and dull conclusions. If he be wise he rereads the article to confirm his own work. Always he seeks to improve the article, to insert a snappy word, to give it life, to smooth the diction or make it more rugged as befits the subject.

When reading news the copy reader must be alert for clews to additional information, for side issues to be added. "The assassin has lived in Canal street, New York" said one of the Milwaukee dispatches—and instantly the copy reader informed the city editor and a reporter was soon on his way to Canal street to learn of the crazy man's record there. "Mrs. Roosevelt is at the Manhattan Hotel" said another message. A reporter was sent to her.

The copy reader must steel himself against the reporter who tries to be funny and isn't, against those persons so well known in every newspaper office who seek

notoriety by getting their names in print, against the social climbers, against the men who want puffs and free advertising, against the wiles of the press agent and the preposterous stories about the people he is exalting, against the schemers whose success depends on newspaper publicity, the fake charity organizations, the spurious reform agitations, the organizations started merely to give salaries to the people who run them, the multitude of movements created to give some one notoriety, the constant attempts to fool the public—the list is endless.

The copy reader must be familiar with the big events attracting public attention for he may be called to revise their next chapter. Many big cases drag on for months. Above all he should take sympathetic interest in every article he revises and in its writer. His every effort should be to improve the article. My own experience as a copy reader for five years was of utmost usefulness to me. Careful editing of copy fixes the subject matter of the copy in memory almost as securely as though you had written the original.

Surely the copy reader fills an especially important post. It is poor policy to intrust this work to incompetent men. Nevertheless, because of its requirements, it is a post not eagerly sought. It is thought to be a thankless task with little to show for results, with maximum opportunity for error and minimum for praise. The copy reader is unlikely to be sought for promotion. He does not mingle with the outside world as does the reporter. He sees no office visitors as do the editors.

His work attracts little favorable attention. If he improves a manuscript the author, not the copy reader, gets the credit. But if you intend to follow the newspaper business, by all means take a turn at copy reading, for it gives valuable experience and information and the practice greatly improves your diction.

As the night advances the avalanche of copy increases, some nights in greater volume than others. It is a curious fact that news volume seems to ebb and flow like the ocean tide, although irregularly, not steadily. For days the news world will be calm, little of interest develops, nothing but routine news offers. And then for days at a time news breaks out from all directions, overwhelming the writing and the revising staffs, upsetting all plans and creating confusion. It is then that the managing editor admonishes: "Gentlemen, the paper is already filled; you must cut everything rigidly"; and the head copy reader, pushing a column manuscript article toward an assistant, commands: "Put it in a quarter of a column"; and the perspiring night editor shouts from the composing room through the telephone: "Can't take another line except must stuff." "Must stuff" means matter that simply must be printed. "Stuff" is the common newspaper office vernacular for all copy, whether it be the profound article of the editor in chief or the incident of a crap game on the pavement. The amateur writer's sensibilities are shocked sometimes when his production is called "stuff."

But whether the tide of copy is at ebb or flood always there is too much of it and the copy reader's night

ends in the contemplation of a mass of discarded manuscript and a ruin of reportorial reputation.

And on the morrow comes an awful hour of reckoning. The editor in chief misses from his own paper a bit of Washington political news that some other paper had printed. He speaks to the managing editor about it, and the managing editor knowing that the news was in the office and was not printed, damns the copy reader for throwing it away. The city editor who had gone home with visions of two fine fat news features each of an embellished column in length finds in their place two emaciated paragraphs containing naught but cold news facts with no juice in them—he damns the copy readers. The reporters who wrote the column stories, reduced to shreds, surcharge the place with spectacular profanity and damn the copy readers. The men who wrote twelve dollars worth of stuff at space rates and had it cut down to three dollars worth, damn the copy readers. The reporters who wrote reams of routine stuff that did not appear at all, damn the copy readers. Everybody damns the copy readers!

The respectable newspapers of America strive sincerely for accuracy of statement. Reporters are instructed constantly to be accurate. Copy readers and every one else in the place are urged to vigil in the detection of error. The news rush and the consequent confusion in the last half hour before getting to press contribute to the danger of mistake, but for the most part every newspaper article is carefully considered and repeatedly scrutinized.

A news report of importance, for instance, is written

by an experienced reporter. Usually it is scanned by the city editor. It is then revised by a copy reader who is supposed to be expert in preparing manuscript. The compositor puts it in type and the proof reader searches it ostensibly for errors in typing, but always must he note any error. He is expected to call to the attention of the night editor any misstatement of fact or violation of newspaper usage or of practice.

Then, too, in almost every office is "the learned proof reader" who bothers himself not with typographical errors but who reads from revised proof sheets in searching quest of anything wrong—misused words, verbal or grammatical slips, misspelled proper names, distortion of any fact—and it is curious what a lot of errors he digs out that have passed everybody else. Likewise in many editorial rooms sits another all-wise man who in a semi-editorial capacity reads proof sheets of all matter in the same search for the undesirable. The managing editor, the night editor, and the night city editor also have proof sheets of all matter which they read devoutly for a dozen reasons. Nevertheless there appeared in one of our especially learned and correct New York newspapers a sentence written by a reporter and passed by the copy reader, the proof reader *ordinaire*, the learned proof reader, the editorial proof reader *de luxe*, the managing editor, the night editor and the night city editor—a sentence that read: "He had fractured her skull by hitting it with an empty bottle of beer."

The same newspaper's music constituency was moved

to emotion one morning on reading that applause followed the singing of "The Soldiers' Chorus by Faust." Whether the writer intended to say that Faust sang the chorus, or the chorus was written by Faust, or that it was from the opera of Faust probably never will be known, but the chances are that he inadvertently wrote "by Faust" when he intended to write "from Faust."

Truth is, that human intelligence has not yet devised a way of keeping error out of printed publications. The public does not understand the painstaking care with which news is presented by well regulated newspapers, nor are the difficulties or the unfavorable conditions under which newspapers are made at all appreciated by people who read. Men of other professions have almost unlimited time for consideration. The lawyer may devote months to the preparation of his case. The clergyman may take seven days to perfect his sermon. The physician at times is called to quick action, but usually he may ponder for hours or days over the condition of his patient.

But quick judgment and quick action are a daily necessity in the newspaper office. The biggest event of the month may explode an hour before time for going to press. The news must be prepared with frantic haste with half the staff tumbling over each other, so to speak, in the rush to be on time. In afternoon sheets all news received after one o'clock and in morning editions after midnight are subject to this acceleration of mind and movement and persons who have not par-

ticipated in the spasm can little appreciate the opportunity for error.

In these hours a man's experience, his general knowledge of the business, is of great assistance. It is then that his confidence or his distrust in the source of the information governs. Rumor is the busybody of the business and her moments of greatest activity are just before the time for going to press.

It is true, also, that first accounts of great events are likely to be exaggerated; almost always are greatly exaggerated. The cable flash announcing the blowing up of the *Maine* in Havana harbor said that not a man remained alive. The first brief telegram telling of the San Francisco earthquake reported that not a building remained standing. With the first report of the assassination of Colonel Roosevelt came the statement that he was dead. First reports of losses of life in great disasters, of losses in big fires, are usually double the actual loss.

It is a vital part of newspaper vigil to question all unusual or extraordinary statements and news editors by habit come to doubt every statement made. This is meant to be said of honest editors; the dishonest ones seek to exaggerate the original exaggeration.

The preparation of newspaper copy in the last hour before going to press gives supreme test to the writer's powers of concentration, his self-possession, and his agility of mind. It happens frequently that the managing editor says to him, "You have just eight minutes in which to finish that article" and a little later the night editor may cry out: "Close everything for this

edition in five minutes." It is exceedingly disturbing to the young man who is beginning. The experienced men are unmoved. It is common enough for a man to write in an hour after midnight a column or more about a murder, a fire, a calamity, or the obituary of a distinguished person. Men who do this rapid work at the last instant may have been on duty for ten or twelve hours and the climax to the day's labor calls for greater intensity than anything that has preceded. Physical endurance is involved as well as mental celerity.

The invention of the typewriter has helped vastly to speed up newspaper composition. The reporter may dictate his narrative. In the old days frequently he had to make a long journey to the newspaper office before beginning to work with pen or pencil. Nowadays, if need be, he dictates his report through the telephone to a typewriter in the office. Newspaper correspondents five hundred, and even one thousand, miles away do this kind of emergency telephoning.

Indeed, it may be said that modern invention has revolutionized the process of speeding up newspaper making. When I first went to New York the capacity of the improved newspaper press was eight pages. If a larger paper were wanted the extra pages were printed separately as a supplement many hours before the main eight sheet was put to press. To-day, thanks to the inventor of the multiple printing press, the news editor may decide fifteen minutes before going to press whether to make a twelve page newspaper or a twenty page newspaper or even a thirty-four page newspaper.

The big modern newspaper is made with a speed that

is almost bewildering. For, in place of the old laborious journeying to the office, the writing of the news with pen or pencil, the typesetting of the same by hand and the old style stereotyping process requiring half an hour, the printing of sheets limited to eight pages on presses that produced only about fifteen thousand copies an hour—in place of these clumsy processes, news reports are dictated over the telephone, the matter is set by machinery in a fraction of the time formerly required, is stereotyped in six minutes and set going on half a dozen presses with a capacity each of more than thirty thousand copies an hour.

The reporting of big events that may be anticipated, like the inauguration of a president, a great festival in honor of a martial hero or in commemoration of peace, or a popular demonstration of any sort—anything that is scheduled to happen, is carefully arranged for in advance.

It is conceded that the biggest and most important single piece of news handled up to that time in a newspaper office was the story of the loss of the *Titanic*. The finest steamship that ever had been made struck an iceberg on her first voyage and sank with a loss of fifteen hundred persons, including scores of our well known residents—and that was all we knew of the disaster until the survivors were landed on a New York pier. The wireless had sent a partial list of survivors but not a word of detail about the disaster itself. Public interest was tremendously excited. It was known that the survivors were to land at a given hour in the

evening and city editors had plenty of time to arrange for getting the great narrative but limited time for writing it—for newspapers must go to press on the minute in order that mail and express bundles of the edition may catch outgoing trains.

Thirty or forty reporters were sent by each New York newspaper to meet the rescue ship. Each man had a definite thing to do. One man, for instance, was to write a column of just what had been going on in the ship for the twenty-four hours before she sank. Another was to write of the warnings to the *Titanic's* officers that ice fields were ahead. Another was to explain just how the ship struck, how she was damaged and how and when she filled and sank. A fourth was to describe in detail how the life boats were manned and launched and who went in them. A fifth was to tell of nothing except what the commander of the ship was doing up to the moment he was lost. Six or eight reporters were instructed to get as many narratives of the experiences of survivors as possible—and so on preparations were made to the completion of every detail that possibly could be anticipated—every man instructed exactly what to do and warned not to attempt anything else.

The preparations for printing this great narrative—and doing it in a hurry—occupied many hours of the time of managing and city editors. The organization of forces was necessary to prevent duplication and confusion, useless running about and tumbling over each other by reporters.

As an additional precaution to save time of reporters in going from the pier to the newspaper office, a dozen telephones were set up in a shed on the pier and a dozen of the reporters were instructed to dictate their reports into the transmitters and a dozen typewriters were ready to take them in the newspaper office.

The first sentence of this big story was written at 10:20 in the evening, and copy for the first edition was shut off two hours afterward. The first edition presses were started on time to the minute with four pages of the disaster. A second edition one hour later had seven pages of disaster matter—the narrative complete—about equivalent in amount to the reading matter of the usual edition of the *Scribner* monthly magazine.

In doing this task neither the writing force nor the mechanical department was extended or distressed or overworked. They could easily perform the same feat every night in the week under the same organization and loyal staff teamwork.

It is the business and the duty of the managing editor to oversee all of these details. He is the executive officer of the newspaper. His first duty is to carry out the policies of the editor in chief or the owner. He is responsible for what goes into the paper. He is supposed to know what is going on in every hemisphere and in every island of the sea and to have it properly presented in the news columns. He must read the other newspapers and periodicals to know what they are printing and what of their contents should be printed

in his own next edition. He hires the staff, except the editorial writers, fixes the salaries, obtains and directly supervises the matter for every column except the editorial page. He must, indeed, keep a sharp eye on that page as well, for it happens frequently that after an editorial article is ready for printing, along comes later news that entirely changes the situation and calls for revision of the article.

He decides questions in dispute. His best asset should be good judgment: judgment what not to print as well as what should be printed; judgment as to proper news values, whether to give one, two, or three columns to an unexpected piece of news that explodes in Washington, Dawson City or off Montauk Point: judgment whether to chance a libel suit on one article or the infringement of copyright in another; whether to minimize a social or a political movement or boom it. And when these questions are flashed on this unfortunate man just as the edition is going to press it must be a quick as well as a decisive judgment.

The managing editor has to deal with men of all ages and of all experiences. A big staff includes cranks, and enthusiasts, students and philosophers, men of every race and religion whose illuminated intelligence reflects every phase of eccentricity, every degree of sanity, as well as every perfection of common sense—men of intelligence, earnestness, sensitiveness, filled with ambition and alive with interest and seeking above all to succeed in the business.

The managing editor needs the coöperation of all

these men. A loyal staff is full of suggestions, will go to extremes in support of its leader; an indifferent staff is silent. It depends largely on how the staff is treated by the management, whether it is loyal or indifferent.

Now you cannot manage a newspaper staff as you might a section gang building a railroad. It is not to be expected that intelligent, sensitive writers will spring to their work, will do better work, while smarting under severe reproof or constant nagging. If they do it is because they fear to lose their jobs, rather than from zeal. Not much good newspaper work is done under an uplifted club. Little else than resentment results from angry words.

One reason for Mr. Charles A. Dana's success may be found in his fine leadership. He inspired the confidence of his helpers by his surpassing knowledge of the business. He encouraged them by his recognition and appreciation of superior work and his absolute justice toward them. He fascinated them by his genial ways. Everybody loved him and would do anything for him. The editor of ability that endears himself to his staff will surely make a great newspaper. The editor whose ability is not respected, who does not recognize good service, who is constantly nagging and complaining and finding fault, and arousing resentment—he will see his circulation slipping away and his influence diminishing. A newspaper staff is made up of delicately constructed, sensitive, self-respecting men and women.

The managing editor hires the staff. And, as the

success of the newspaper depends on the writers, it behooves him to be careful in the selection. The staff changes somewhat rapidly, its members drop out to go to better posts on other newspapers or into other businesses and new men are called to their places. Methods of recruiting the staff differ in different offices. Many of the most successful newspapers have a way of hiring young men to join as reporters and gradually advancing them through a continuous process of growth. Thus a man is available always to fill a vacancy and the staff in general is always complete. The real vacancy is at the bottom of the list. Three months' trial usually tests out a beginner.

The newspaper is overrun with applicants. Every graduating college class includes some men who wish to try the business. The schools of journalism in the United States are turning out about four thousand students yearly who want to go to work immediately. Many broken-down clergymen and discarded school teachers think they can write and they apply along with professional men, clerks, salesmen and others who have failed to make good. A swarm of high school boys come along after graduation. Very many men who have succeeded in country or small city newspapers want to get going in the big cities. Bright newspaper office boys seek to become reporters and go on to success. It is from all of these that the staff is recruited. The managing editor of experience comes to know almost by instinct whether an applicant will make a good newspaper man, and while few of those who come are selected,

it is also true that a large proportion of those who are taken make good.

The supervision of the modern newspaper is much more difficult than it was forty years ago for the reason that the staff is four or five times as large. The size of the sheet has been more than quadrupled. The managing editor no longer finds it possible to read every paragraph in proof sheet before its publication; he must trust to his helpers. The increased volume of matter compels increased labor in originating it, increased attention to its consideration and preparation for printing. The managing editor's work literally is fourfold what it used to be. The tendency of the hour is toward yet larger editions.

CHAPTER III

NEWSPAPER COMPOSITION—THE ART OF WRITING IN SIMPLE YET ENTERTAINING FASHION

The young man just starting in journalism is asked to write in the simplest words and the shortest sentences at his command. He is told that the reader wants facts rather than elegances of expression and that the plainest language is the best newspaper style.

By plain language is not meant the language of the child's primer, but rather the use of good Saxon concrete nouns and active verbs in sentences not embellished with verbose phrases. Nevertheless, when editors tell the young reporter to use the plainest language they mean usually that they will be satisfied with it in his routine reporting. But they encourage the study of "how to produce rich effects by the use of familiar words," how to write not only with steadiness and strength, but also with those little embellishments of incidental word and phrase that lift the work above the commonplace. And they unceasingly urge the necessity of good writing—for not anywhere is good writing appreciated more than in a newspaper office.

To write the simple language requires much study

and practice—more, indeed, than to write the other kind. It is natural for people, children especially, to use simple words, but the schools and colleges have taught, until within a few years, the writing of rather high-sounding prose. Textbooks have reflected Dr. Johnson's ornate paragraphs, Macaulay's massive profundities, Washington Irving's beautifully rounded florid sentences, and Sir Walter Scott's superlatives. For years and years they were commended to students of literature for imitation. The effect of this teaching remains. We find it difficult to write in the same simplicity with which we talk. It does not come natural to us. The editor gave fine advice to the cartoonist from whom he wanted an article. Said the cartoonist: "He just offered me one suggestion—inasmuch as I was not a regular writer—that I refrain from trying to write and simply tell in my own words as though I were telling it to my wife." That's it: refrain from trying to write if you wish to write in simple language and simple style.

It is well enough to write as you talk if you are a good talker. Hundreds of articles of advice in the last fifty years have urged young men to write as they talk. But almost all talk is without study, is commonplace, is not the expression of consecutive thought, is disjointed construction. It is recognized that dictated articles have less finish than those penned. Nevertheless, the direct way, the simplest way is undoubtedly the best way of writing. Emerson says: "The speech of the street is incomparably more forceful than the

speech of the academy." Lafcadio Hearn says of Kipling: "No one has managed to produce great effects with so few words."

But why speak of it as "newspaper style," when there isn't any such thing? Almost every kind of writing is used by newspapers. All kinds of literature are printed in them—the scholarly essay, the article of argument, the expository editorial paragraph, the story of fiction, the language of verse, the consideration of art, music, the play, all sorts of description of all kinds of happenings in every part of our old earth—and all are written without uniformity of diction or construction. There is no style that the newspaper rejects. The experienced editor seeks diversity of writing and of topic in every column. He studies to that end.

Some style of writing is so plain that you do not notice it. It is like the well dressed man whose clothing is so simple and appropriate that it is not attracting attention wherever he goes. Merimee said of Stendhal that he despised mere style and insisted that a writer had attained perfection when we remember his ideas without recalling his phrases. Of George Saintsbury, the English critic, it was said: "He always thought it of more importance to utter the thought than to care about the form of utterance. . . . If he had given more attention to style we should have been deprived of some of the benefits of his knowledge."

Indeed, some great newspaper narratives are of such absorbing interest in themselves—great disasters like

the sinking of the *Lusitania* or the *Titanic*—that the reader's attention is entirely concentrated on the facts and he does not notice the diction or the construction. No matter how disjointed or horribly written the narrative may be he finishes it with the impression that he has read a great article. Nevertheless, every article is the better for good telling. And probably no greater newspaper accomplishment exists than the ability to write well. It is of increasing value as the young man goes on to higher grade work.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in a lecture to the Cambridge students urges them to study writing and to practice writing, to write and rewrite with intent to gain facility in diction and in the fashioning of sentences, and especially to seek to make their prose "accurate, perspicuous, persuasive, and appropriate." He would insure greater accuracy by the study and practice of the use of words. Thought and speech being inseparable, it follows that we cannot use the humblest processes of thought—cannot resolve to take our bath hot or cold, or decide what to order for breakfast—without forecasting it in some form of words. Words, in fine, he urges, are the only currency in which we can exchange thought even with ourselves. Does it not follow, then, that the more accurately we use words the closer definition we shall give to our thoughts? "And by drilling ourselves to write perspicuously we train our minds to clarify our thought, since language is the expression of thought. The first aim of speech is to be understood and the more clearly we write the more

easily and surely we will be understood. Not to be understood is to be a sloven in speech."

Lafcadio Hearn urged the students of the University of Tokyo to study the construction of sentences—to write them over and over again until they were nearly perfect, saying:

> A thing once written is not literature. . . . No man can produce real literature at one writing. . . . To produce even a single sentence of good literature requires that the text be written at least three times. . . . For literature more than for any other art the all-necessary thing is patience.

He advised the students to write a practice piece and put it away for a week. Then to revise it and put it away again, and to continue the process of revision until they could improve it no more.

Tolstoy rewrote his important work three or four times. Rossetti revised "The Blessed Damosel" in many editions until the last was quite unlike the first. Tennyson changed his productions over and again. Gray was fourteen years in perfecting the "Elegy." It is notorious that Sir Walter Scott's later novels, written at great speed, are much inferior to his earlier more leisurely work. Samuel Butler's masterpiece "The Way of All Flesh" was under construction for twelve years.

All literary history furnishes examples of great authors who toiled long over their manuscripts. Macaulay devoted more time to revising his essays than to writing them. Their superiority over his history, as literary products, is revealed by study of them. The his-

tory was written more hurriedly. The essays are the product of nearly one hundred years ago, but they serve to illustrate the possibilities of our language and the beauties of thoughtful writing and intense thinking. We look elsewhere in vain for such adroit phrasing and such thunder-claps of climax. Study them, young man!

Some present-day writers criticize Macaulay for his long-drawn sentences, his reiteration and his wanderings from the narrative into a confusion of details. Yet Macaulay was imitated by essayists for fifty years. His style was the vogue. And Macaulay in turn had both praised and criticized in no feeble fashion his great predecessor, Dr. Samuel Johnson, who had been the vogue for nearly a hundred years.

The men of greatest reputation as critics, Sainte-Beuve, Edmund Gosse, Macaulay, Saintsbury and others, put intensive study into what they wrote. If they were to review a book they made a study of the subject of the book and of the life and mentality of the author: and sometimes their production was of more use to the world than the book itself. Their works are not so much read in this money-making age, but they are among the great contributions to thoughtful literature and the student of journalism will read them with great profit to himself. For your own work is to be thoughtful work—work intended to persuade and influence readers to your own way of thinking.

Writing for newspapers differs from other literary work in this: the newspaper writer has little opportunity for revision. Almost all articles for daily sheets

are written at a single sitting. The writers of editorial articles have several hours in which to compose and usually they get a proof sheet for revision. The writers of short news articles may read and correct their manuscript. But in the big offices as soon as the reporter who is writing an article of any considerable length has finished two or three pages they are grabbed by an office boy, hurried to a copy reader who revises them as best he may and rushes them to the composing room to be typed. The writer does not see his pages again, does not read them over, even, after writing them. All big reports—stories of great disasters, of football matches, of public meetings or demonstrations are prepared with this haste.

The play house and opera critics compose under these same trying conditions with no opportunity for leisurely thought or revision. It is difficult, indeed, to write of a great performance in a whirlwind of hurry, with less than two hours for deliberate and consecutive thought. The French critic's way of presenting a news paragraph in the edition following the performance and reserving a carefully prepared review for a later-date publication commends itself; but the American newspapers continue to print exhaustive comments on first-night performances two or three hours after the fall of the curtain. The opera critic has the advantage of attending rehearsals of new operas and he may prepare parts of his article in advance, but rehearsals are spiritless, for performers have not the inspiration and response of the audience.

Intensity of thought and concentration must engross the newspaper writer. He must prepare himself by study and practice to throw every atom of his mental vitality into the work, to write immediately and without expectation of revision exactly what should appear in the newspaper. Mind discipline is a powerful factor. The man must school himself to work under conditions of mental anguish, physical distress, heart sorrow or unhappiness of any sort. He cannot surrender to moods, whims, or to physical sensations. He must continue hour after hour, day after day, with the same hurry-up speed. As in crowded Broadway, if you cannot keep up with the procession you must be trodden on or take to a side street, so must the active newspaper man everlastingly keep going. It is largely a matter of mind discipline, of study and of practice, of intense mental concentration and of swiftness of thought.

Please do not undervalue the priceless benefits of practice—of practice that will give skill in saying exactly what you want to say the first time you say it. In leisurely writing you may rewrite and change and make perfect, but in newspaper writing you have one dash only at it without much opportunity for change or revision. Your reputation as a newspaper writer hangs on that one attempt. You can cultivate the gift of ready speech in writing just as many a finished orator has cultivated it in speaking.

It is said of President Woodrow Wilson that early in his youth he appreciated the advantages of ready speech and set about to improve himself in its use. He

practiced speaking long and constantly. In the seclusion of his room he conducted imaginary debates, talking to himself on first one side and then the other of some public question. On his walks, while a student, he addressed the crags and peaks, the winding rivers, the peaceful meadows—all for practice in the quick use of language, the shading of sentences and the putting of emphasis on climaxes of thought and conclusion. And he became one of the most interesting and convincing and scholarly public speakers this country, or any other country for that matter, has ever known.

The young writer should seek to rise above the commonplace. It was said of Machiavelli that "having adopted some of the maxims then generally received he arranged them more luminously and expressed them more forcibly than any other writer." The young writer should cultivate the art of making his words and sentences exude the very spirit of the occasion—the art of describing joyous events with joyous words and of shadowing melancholy happenings in the language of gloom. He should seek the faculty of "making obscure truth pleasing, of making repulsive truth attractive." Let him follow the counsel of a distinguished critic who says:

Choose concrete nouns rather than vague, abstract woolly ones.

Use straightforward speech rather than circumlocution.

Remember that the first virtue, the touchstone of masculine style is the use of the active verb and concrete noun. When you write in the active voice, "They gave him a silver

teapot" you write as a man. When you write, "He was made the recipient of a silver teapot" you write jargon.

Avoid overworked words is common advice to young journalists. An article in the *Writer* has much to say of ways by which the constant use of the word "said" may be prevented. "Said" sometimes becomes monotonous, especially in the dialogue of fiction; but almost always another verb may be found to express the author's meaning. The *Writer* printed a list of three hundred and eighty-two verbs, found in about fifty magazine stories, which had been used instead of "said." Frequently the use of a verb helps to make more concise as well as to avoid the word "said." " 'It hurts,' said John, in a complaining tone," is not so good as " 'It hurts,' John complained." Again, " 'Please help me,' said the beggar in pitiful beseeching appeal," is better expresed by " 'Please help me,' the beggar pleaded." The language is rich in verbs.

Another greatly overworked word, and a slow word as well, is the word "show." It does seem as though the average newspaper writer cannot think of any other word when he writes that "this action"—or "this event"—or "this conclusion"—or "this computation shows that"—etc., when he might say, attests, evinces, betokens, bespeaks, implies, indicates, proves—or any other suitable verb of the twenty-five or more he may find in a thesaurus.

Constant looseness of speech is found in the use of explanatory phrases that might be expressed by a

single verb. The verb is the heart of language life, the soul of expression. Why, for instance, do we write, "He reflected on the situation" when "he cogitated" would express all?

Let us illustrate a bit more:

He spoke reprovingly to the boy. He chided the boy.

He spoke in a mocking, deriding manner. He jeered.

His breath came convulsively and brokenly. He gasped.

They exchanged idle words and gossip. They babbled.

He gave utterance again to the thought. He echoed the thought.

He was filled with wonder. He marveled.

He busied himself with the affairs of his neighbors. He meddled.

He thought over the situation. He meditated.

He uttered a suppressed groan. He moaned.

She spoke in low indistinct words. She mumbled.

His was an exhibition of empty talk. He palavered.

I am aware that these things are elementary—exceedingly elementary, but they are of utmost import to young newspaper writers. Slovenly, disjointed, confused diction must retard your progress.

It was constant study that made Dana and Greeley the great journalists that they were. Neither of them wasted a minute. If at the close of the day's work Dana's final proof sheet was promised to him in seven minutes he withdrew from the little revolving book-rack on his desk a copy of the Greek Testament and utilized

the seven minutes by reading it. Never was a question of fact raised but he joined in the search for the truth of it in the most enthusiastic manner. His zeal and his interest were a source of inspiration to the staff. With him study was the key to every problem.

When in 1880 he asked me to be the managing editor of the *Sun*, the answer was:

"Mr. Dana, I do not know enough to be your managing editor."

"What do you mean by that?" was his question.

"I mean that the managing editor of your newspaper should have wide, extensive, general information. I know very little about politics, or finance, or art, for instance. A managing editor should have expert knowledge of them."

"What is the objection to your devoting a little time each day to the study of these things in which you feel yourself deficient," was Mr. Dana's calm reply. "I did not know so much about them myself, when I first came to the city as I do to-day."

I now appreciate that whatever progress I afterward made in the business came largely from this suggestion; and I feel like passing it along to the young man who aspires to newspaper honors. How true it is that to achieve you must study to the limit of your resources; you must think to the limit of your intelligence; you must strive to the limit of your endurance—then you have done your best and that marks the measure of your success.

Study—persistent, laborious, intelligent study—is the key to success in writing. Occasionally a genius

startles the public with a spontaneous facility for the use of words and sentences, but the other nine thousand nine hundred and ninety nine of us newspaper plodders must achieve our purposes by the hardest kind of hard work. We must study the derivation of words, the varied uses of words. And if we are to keep up with these snappy times we must hunt for strong masculine nouns, and rapid-fire verbs, and staccato adjectives, and sudden adverbs. Almost always we can find a better word than the one that first suggests itself, if we hunt for it. Almost always we may shorten and simplify a sentence if we study it.

The word spoken may be forgotten. The word written stands for all time. The orator may move his hearers by eloquence, by gesture, by facial expression, by the tricks of public speaking, even though his actual words be feeble or not well chosen, or his conclusions be not convincing. His words may be forgotten—certainly will not be remembered unless preserved—but they have been reinforced by his arts of eloquence, maybe by his audacity of speech, by his personality, and the net result is favorable. The orator's bluff may at times serve him well, but the words of the writer must stand on their own merit for all time. Type inspires little emotion. There are few typographical tricks that cause heart-flutter or mental spasm. Just plain words alone —words, words, words, nearly every one of which is already familiar to the reader, must make the writer's success or failure. How important that every word be studied.

The young journalist cannot be urged too strongly

to study the use of words. Every word in the language has its correct use; a vast number are used incorrectly. You will find it a most interesting study. If you doubt its interest, be so good as to open your dictionary to any haphazard page and read intently for fifteen minutes. You will find words the existence of which you had not known, the meanings of which you had not understood. Observe the derivation and the primary meaning of the word and you cannot miss the proper use. You cannot put time to better purpose, if you seek for excellence in English composition, than by studying the English dictionary a few minutes every day.

When a writer is sure of his information, is sincere in his attitude, and is eager and enthusiastic for its presentation, the words and the sentences usually come to him with ease. It is when he is shaky over his facts, or insincere, or dishonest, that his words become feeble, and lack convincing quality, do not ring true. It is curious how often dishonest journalism convicts itself through timidity of diction.

The English language is reaching afar. Those there are who predict that eventually it will be spoken everywhere. Already it is the language of more than two hundred million persons. It will carry the tourist all over the globe by the established routes of travel,—through the streets of Japan, and the bazars of India, and the South Sea islands of the Pacific. Tennyson said to Sir Edwin Arnold: "It is bad for us that English will always be a spoken speech, since that means

that it will always be changing and so the time will come when you and I will be as hard to read as Chaucer is to-day."

Indeed, the English language is changing constantly. We are eliding letters, lopping off terminations, cutting out phrases and abolishing circumlocution. It is not so old a language as a score of others and every opportunity for improvement exists. It is, indeed, "an improvable language."

Compare, if you please, any modern narrative with the beginning of Chaucer's "The Tale of Melibeus":

A young man called Melibeus, mighty and riche, begat upon his wif, that called was Prudens, a doughter which that called was Sophie. Upon a day byfel, that for his disport he is went into the fields him to play. His wif and his doughter eek hath he laft in-with his hous, of which the dores were fast shut. Thre of his olde foos have it espyed, and setten laddres to the walles of his hous, and by the wyndowes be entred, and beetyn his wyf, and woundid his doughter with fyve mortal woundes in fyve sondry places, that is to sayn, in her feet, in her hondes, in her eeres, in her nose, and in her mouth; and lafte her for deed, and went away.

Or imagine if you can to what small space a modern newspaper copy reader would reduce the following bit of Washington Irving prose that was printed in school readers sixty years ago as an example of graceful writing and felicity of expression:

In one of those somber and rather melancholy days in the latter part of autumn when the shadows of morning and evening almost mingle together and throw a gloom over

the decline of the year I passed several hours rambling around Westminster Abbey. There was something congenial to the season in the mournful magnificence of the old pile; and, as I passed its threshhold, it seemed like stepping back into the regions of antiquity and losing myself among the shades of former ages.

Usage is amplifying the service of many words whose primary meaning is obvious from their Latin derivation. *Dexter* is the Latin word meaning the right hand, and strictly speaking "dextrous movements" should mean right hand movements. But usage has brought dexterity to mean readiness, skill, adroitness, aptitude, both physical or mental. Macaulay uses it constantly in all of these meanings. "Manufacture" is easily traced to the Latin origin *manus*, the hand, and *facio*, to make —to make by hand. But we have come to use "manufacture" for the making of anything, by machinery, or chemical processes, or in any way other than with the hand. And who shall say that these usages, these enlargements of the meaning of dexterity and manufacture, have not improved the English language?

More than ever before is there present-day need for the use of plain, understandable English. We live in a money-making age—an age of industrial development, in which machines are doing the work that brains used to do, in which vocational and technical education are demanded of our schools and colleges, and in which the cry for technical literature is insistent. Experts only understand the technical words and the language of their specialty, hence the cry for writers who can trans-

late technical language into plain English that any reader may understand. Dean West, of Princeton, has deplored the inability of many professors to teach orally or in writing in any other language than the dialect of their specialties. Lacking in literary training they are unable clearly to say what they think.

Some one asked William T. Stead, the English journalist, whether he would have an astronomer or a newspaper writer prepare an article on sun spots, and Stead's instant reply was that the astronomer would write it for astronomers in language that no one else would understand, but the reporter would tap the brain of the specialist and so serve out his knowledge that the ordinary reader would understand.

All the tendency of present-day writing is to translate technical language, scientific terms, professional formula, and medical terms into plain common sense English. Let the good work go on!

And let not the young man contemplating a journalistic career be persuaded that newspaper English is not good English. The men who wrote for the newspapers of the Spanish-American War, of the great political movements of Europe of later years, of our great industrial developments, and of the World War in particular, are the very men who have rewritten these things into history for magazines and for book publishers. When they wrote this information for the newspapers, distinguished college professors and learned critics called it "journalese"; when it appears in the reviews and in books they speak of it as "literature."

In praise of newspaper writing as good training for writers, Anatole France has this to say:

> It is an inveterate prejudice to believe that one spoils his pen in writing for the newspapers. On the contrary one gains in that way suppleness as also ease and that readiness without which the phrase does not move gracefully and never smiles. It is a good school say what one will.

Some of the modern English seems very practical and easy to understand. The use of the words "scrapped" and "junked" as verbs seems to have been put permanently into the language by the Washington Disarmament Conference. A well known journal says, "The newspapers were kidding him," and very likely we will have to accept "kid" as a verb. The entire Navy now says of a man who goes from one place to another that he "shoves off." It is proper to say of a dissatisfied man that he is "peeved," according to the dictionaries, but its use is new. Food is now known as "eats" and the pleasures of the pipe or cigar are called "smokes." A recent head-line said, "Flivvers furnish booze to soldiers." Another newspaper transforms "hokus" into a verb: "Complained that she hokused him," while the scholarly *New Republic* says of some occupation of youngsters that "it gives them no time to go on the loose."

A new invention brings out a new crop of words. We have "automobile," "garage," "speedometer," "limousine," "taxi," "taximeter," "motorboat," "motorcycle," "chauffeur," all useful and necessary additions

to our elastic language. The airplane has brought as many more. Our slang goes on apace.

Make your sheet easy to read, as well as easy to understand. The other day a morning paper in a London cable said, "Wheat sold at 60 shillings a quarter in the corn market to-day." That sentence gave the mind of the reader a jolt and a pause, in the attempt to translate shillings and quarters into cents and bushels. Few American readers are familiar with foreign languages, hence all words, as well as quotations, in the French, German, or other tongues, should be made into English. Pounds, marks, and francs should be computed into dollars and cents, kilometers into miles. And who knows where in New York State the Thirty-fifth Congress District is? Why not call it the Syracuse district? Or who can tell where in New York City the Sixteenth Precinct police station may be? Why not identify it as the Mercer Street station?

On the first Sunday of President Wilson's stay in Paris he went to church and the Associated Press report said the clergyman preached from Isaiah ix. 9. Naturally the words of the text were not transmitted at full cable rates; and naturally, too, a certain curiosity was felt as to what they were. Yet of six New York daily newspapers examined, one only had taken the pains to dig out the text and print it. That sheet certainly served its readers better than did the others.

A little discreet exuberance of expression may be tolerated in newspaper writing. Sensational newspapers do no harm as long as they stick to the truth.

You may print your editions in red ink, with job type, with headlines a foot high if you like, without other offenses than to exaggerate the importance of your announcement. Typographical eccentricity merely attracts attention. It serves the same purpose as does the orator's violent gesture or the messenger's breathless announcement. It excites curiosity, arouses interest.

Now, there is such a thing as harmless exaggeration. It enters largely into our private life. Our dreams of wealth, of success, of happiness are usually far beyond the fulfillment. We exaggerate our prospects, ambitions and promises to ourselves. But this form of exaggeration is most beneficial for it is a spur to ambition and a prod to effort.

The editor is tempted to exaggeration because a little exaggeration makes it a little more interesting. He sees that the exaggerated novel sells while the novel true to life is unnoticed; that the actor who gesticulates and shouts has the loudest applause; that the painter who outdoes nature outsells the artist who is true to fact. Indeed, some philosopher has said that an easy road to success lies through exaggeration. The man who exaggerates his own importance attracts more attention than the modest man. The merchant who exaggerates his wares sells more than the man who does not. Sensational clergymen fill churches while prosy ones preach to empty benches. It was Sidney Smith who remarked: "It is not the first man who says a thing who deserves credit for it, but he who says it so

long and so loud that at last he persuades the world that it is true." Macaulay remarked: "The best portraits are perhaps those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature, and we are not certain that the best histories are not those in which a little of exaggeration, of fictitious narrative, is judiciously employed."

But the editor must use exaggeration with great discretion, must not pervert the truth. Gross exaggeration becomes downright lying.

Man's language cunningly adapts itself to man's thoughts. Sixty years ago writers were under the influence of what may be described as a literary age—that so-called golden age of the intellect that marked the early years of Victoria's reign. It was a period of intellectual uplift. People were thinking of literature and talking of literature. Men hurried through their suppers to read to the family circle the stories of Dickens and Hawthorne and Walter Scott. The literary lecture was popular and people went to church for the literary pleasure the sermon afforded. The newspaper editors were writing literature and were urging their staffs to renewed literary effort. The magazines were conspicuous for literary excellence. The theaters were instructive. The writers of poetry and prose sought a nicety of literary expression, a daintiness of diction, a legato of language. Courses of study favored instruction in literature and literary topics, in language and history, in science and philosophy.

And now, if you please, mark the contrast. We are living in a business age. War has blunted our sensibili-

ties, has made us callous, has coarsened civilization. We care little for so-called polite literature. We want the rugged kind. The family circle does not meet for literary exercises. We are thinking of commercialism, of money making, of gigantic locomotives, of immense bridges and tunnels, of aqueducts a hundred and thirty miles long, of skyscraping buildings, flying machines, telephones, typewriting machines, typesetting machines, electric devices. We are thinking of them until we are thinking of little else.

It is the age of the machine. Mechanical processes are doing the work that formerly demanded mental skill. The village blacksmith no longer commands admiration by his picturesque and intelligent forging of the nail and shoe—he buys them ready made by machinery. The learned shoemaker no longer artfully fashions my lady's dainty slipper—the shoe machine punches it out. We bawl letters and dinner invitations through that mechanical device, the telephone, instead of writing them in the old fashioned courtly way. Time was when men put brains into what they did with their hands; but to-day, machines rather than brains are doing the work of the world.

Our language and our literature cannot escape the influence. Instead of the sweetly gliding words and sentences of the men who translated the Bible, the deliberation of Thackeray, the ornate embellishments of Washington Irving—instead of the soft speaking poetry of 1850 and the flossy velvet prose of 1860 our present-day writers are using whirlwind sentences and

words in staccato that bite and scratch and explode. We are changing our diction from the niceties of literary expression to a blunter and a coarser form of expression.

There can be no harm in it, however. The net result is to improve the language. It is taking on the additional strength and agility and brevity that come of our industrial activity. The very magnitude of our undertakings, the very dimensions of our ambitions inspire to greatness of thought and forcefulness of speech. The red blood of war is nourishing the vitals of our language.

CHAPTER IV

THE FASCINATION OF WRITING FOR THE EDITORIAL PAGE

Our young man who has just entered journalism begins soon to look longingly toward the editorial page. He wants to become an editorial writer. He longs to get into the world's controversies, to thump Presidents, to crush cabinets, to pulverize politicians, to rebuke rulers, to sandbag ignorance, sin and superstition whenever they raise their swollen heads. His immature notion of editorial writing is to smash into somebody or something. He has a lot to learn.

The editorial page is the most important part of the newspaper. It gives the sheet its greatest distinction, its widest influence, its chief reputation—gives the editor his proudest satisfaction. It is here that the editor shows to the public the true measure of his ability and inspires the confidence and the respect of his community, if at all.

The editorial article is a little essay on a current topic. You may glorify the topic by giving it conspicuous importance in the strongest language at command, or you may minimize it by inane flabby comments on its weakest features and by ignoring its essentials.

You may give it fine literary flavor, or you may drool over it. The tricks of the trade come with practice.

Editorial writing is fascinating. To wield influence always gives satisfaction. For centuries it has been the ambition of orators and writers to influence men's thoughts, to direct men's actions.

Creative work is perhaps the most enjoyable of all work. In the newspaper it has come to be the most important. An original editorial article summons all the creative ability of the writer. It is the product of his years of study and experience. The news department may be conducted without an access of book learning, for news getting has become so systematized and its principles so easy to learn that it is difficult to invent a new way of treating the news. But before you have been an editorial writer many months you will have called into precious use all of your reasoning powers, all of your philosophy, all of the principles of life and of conduct you may have observed.

These modern days are big with new discoveries and they are first made public through the newspapers. They give glorious opportunity for special study, for mastery of the subject; not necessarily a profound finality of knowledge of it, but a knowledge comprehensive enough to write about it, a knowledge fascinating in itself as a study—enough to give its possessor advantage in social conversation and receptiveness of mind for any new development of the subject.

And it astonishes to discover what a lot of information may be had from just a few hours of acute mental

concentration on a given subject. In these modern times the literature, even the textbooks of everything new, are quickly available. The book publishers never were so alert or so spry to furnish technical knowledge. Such facilities for practical study never were known. Mere mention to the modern librarian of the nature of the information sought brings you volumes on the subject in a twinkling.

In large cities where the newspapers are opulent and large staffs are employed, the editorial writer is expected to produce one article only each day. If it be for a morning sheet he has a few hours in which to prepare it; if it be for an evening edition it must be written quickly. But the number of opulent newspapers is few in comparison with the number not able to have large staffs. In almost all American daily newspapers the editorial writer is expected to furnish several articles every day. Always he is hurried. He has little time for study or for proper thought. His task tempts to a condition of routine thought; tempts to the utterance of the obvious, to imitation and the reproduction of the thoughts of others. Hurried writing usually is slovenly writing and that is a reason why nine-tenths of our editorial writing is mediocre.

The editorial writer should devote much time to study. Not in any other profession is there greater necessity for study, greater use for the knowledge that is power. The editor whose cranium is crammed with facts has great advantage over the editor whose cranium is empty, for the mind, especially the editorial mind,

feeds on facts. The editor must furnish information and comment on a multitude of facts widely diverse in themselves, topics treating of every phase of human life, every shade of animate or inanimate condition. He must study the topic enough to write on it skillfully. He must convince the reader of his mastery of the subject. Bulwer Lytton's reiteration that "Knowledge is power" finds constant verification in newspaper editing.

Almost all newspaper editorial articles, critiques of the drama or of music, and all news articles are written at a single sitting and under the constant admonition to "hurry up" both mind and movement. The writer must acquire the art of instant concentration of thought on the one subject, of instantly recalling precedents and of quickly foreseeing results. This everlasting hurry is a serious drawback to good newspaper making; but it is a powerful incentive, also, to quick thinking. What has been said of the politician, that often he must act before he has read or thought, is singularly true of the editor. The editorial writer must understand the political and commercial and social questions of the hour and must be prepared to hop right into a discussion of them at a moment's notice. He must train himself to use quick judgment and to arrive at quick conclusions.

News intelligence may be so presented that it will have quick influence on the reader. Often it may produce flash conclusions that may be reversed by next day's news. Many readers glance at headlines and quickly scan news columns and are influenced by what

they see without giving it a scrap of intellectual reflection.

But the editorial writer must have real merit to influence other men. He must possess the art of composition, of ready speech, of carrying conviction. He not only thinks for his reader, but he seeks to persuade the reader to his way of thinking. But always the editorial article should be a help to the reader, should inform, interest, explain, elucidate as well as influence.

The modern headline artist has solved the problem of attracting the reader's attention. The editorial writer has not the advantage of typographical eccentricity to help him; he must attract and convince by what he says.

It is difficult to indicate, even much less to advise the student of journalism, how to study for editorial writing—so vast is the field of desirable knowledge. But first of all he must read the newspapers and the periodical publications, for he must understand the topics that are engaging public thought. The editor must absorb and remember a mass of current facts that will not be recorded in textbooks and histories for months or years to come if indeed they ever are recorded. The newspapers are the first to record great events, the weekly press is next, and the magazines then follow. Histories and textbooks come along later. No other way of keeping up with public events has been discovered. The process is easy and interesting, however.

There should be thoughtful study of the great principles that govern human conduct. All history is use-

ful. And obviously the editor cannot know too much of the fundamentals of government, of law, diplomacy, politics, and political causes, of finance, taxation, philanthropy, the relations of labor and capital and so on—the list is endless. The schools of journalism give much attention to these essentials. Their courses are prepared with great wisdom for the attainment of practical knowledge. Young men who would be journalists will profit greatly by study in these schools.

In almost all of the large newspaper offices there is a daily editorial council composed of the editorial writers, the managing editor, the city editor, the foreign editor, and sometimes the Sunday editor, and the special writers. This council meets at the beginning of the newspaper day. The events of the moment have informal discussion and a general conclusion is indicated by the editor as to what must be the editorial attitude toward them. Thus the editorial policy of the sheet is understood by all. The editor assigns to the writers their topics for discussion.

The editor indicates the paper's policy toward all public questions and the editorial page is just what he makes it. The newspaper does not rise above its editor. His assistants write as he directs and wishes, without question, regardless of their personal convictions as to the wisdom of the policy or their personal attitude toward it. But an assistant is not often asked to write contrary to his convictions.

The editor usually revises all editorial page articles and his staff does not return for night work as was

the practice of morning newspaper editorial writers fifty years ago. One editorial writer remains to comment briefly on any extraordinary news that may develop. This change in general newspaper practice was inspired by the late Charles A. Dana who urged that all editorial comment should be prepared with great deliberation and thoughtfulness, that hastily written articles were perfunctory or were expression of the obvious. He wanted not the editorial expression written at midnight for publication at two A. M. and the other editors came to his way of thinking and doing.

Little change has been made in the appearance of the editorial page in the last fifty years. The make-up remains about the same, the most important article or "the leader" occupying first place, the other articles tapering off in the order of their supposed goodness or importance. Few new features are seen. The column or two of letters to the editor appear with the same regularity and in the same place as they did fifty years ago, written, as then, for the most part by persons who delight to see their names in print, who like to find fault or criticize, who seek to exploit a hobby or a precious project for reforming something. Nevertheless, many letters to the editor are of great value, informative, suggestive, original. Some of the newspaper controversies in which the public takes part are amusing and instructive. Many of the letters to the editor are written by the editor himself—an easy, convenient device for avoiding personal responsibility for the sentiment exploited.

The increase in the size of newspapers has been that more pages of news and department features may be added. The editorial page has remained unchanged. Indeed, instead of additional editorial articles following increase of the sheet's size the tendency has been to print less comment. We have quadrupled the volume of space devoted to general news, to sports, to financial reports, but have actually lessened the number of columns carrying editorial articles.

But we note decided change in the editorial articles themselves, in the choice of topics for comment, in the character, the quality, the spirit of discussion, in the diction. The old time editorial page was devoted almost entirely to politics. It was the expression of a strongly partisan editor and was surcharged with vituperation and abuse of his personal and political enemies and of the opposition candidates. "You lie, you villain; and you know you lie" was one of the gentler forms of argument in common use. The ability of the enemy candidate and the quality of his political principles were treated with unfairness and contempt. This unfairness flavored news reports as well. I distinctly remember a meeting of three thousand howling, shouting, partisan lunatics alive with vim and bursting with enthusiasm all honestly interested in their cause; and they were described next morning by an opposition newspaper as a handful of silent, melancholy, dejected, drooling curiosity seekers and vagrants who had crawled into the hall to keep warm.

But the modern newspaper has ceased to be a rigid

partisan organ. It is much more moderate of discussion. There is less acrimonious attack on public men, less political misrepresentation, less unfairness toward any opponent. Indeed, it is common enough nowadays for an editor to make a fair and honest presentation of the opposition argument before undertaking to demolish it. It always has been a question whether excessive vituperation and venomous attack have as much influence as temperate reasoning and the moderate expression of righteous conclusions. It is easy to call names—to call a man a thief or a liar—and the personal journalism of fifty years ago rang with such language. The editorial writing of to-day is moderation itself compared with the old time kind.

Even more conspicuous is the change in the choice of topics selected for editorial discussion. Politics dominated four-fifths of the old time page, day after day. The stirring events preceding and succeeding the Civil War aroused great interest in political principles and in political leadership. It was a continuous performance of political strife involving the issues of secession, the extension of slavery to the new states, the conduct of the war, and the multitude of complications and consequences attending reconstruction. The period between 1850 and 1870 was perhaps the most important politically in American history after the Revolution. The American editor was in his glory.

Just at that time the Victorian era of literature was at full growth. It was a literary age. We are living just now in a commercial age and commercialism en-

grosses public attention. It is changing our processes of thinking, changing our choice of editorial topics from political and literary topics to commercial topics, changing our diction from the smoothly flowing ornate sentences of the Victorian era to a blunter, more robust form of expression that tells what it wants to say in a staccato of fewest, shortest words.

Nevertheless, in the plain robust writing of the day we miss much of the pleasure of reading. In the everlasting hunt for fact, for practical information, there is less food for the imagination, less suggestion on which we may enlarge the imagination. Our thoughts are directed in mathematical lines, in practical directions. There is less of the sentimental.

Politics we must have with us always, but the routine politics of ordinary times do not especially interest the public. It is in the few months of a presidential campaign only that we find the American people approaching political excitement. An Edison test of political knowledge would bring many of us to grief. How many readers of these lines, for instance, can name the officers of their state chosen at the latest election, or can name the state's delegation in Congress, or can give even the name of each member of the President's cabinet and the post he occupies?

Always there must be love for good literature among the cultured, but the mass of the people care less for literature than they did fifty years ago when the literature of the Victorian period was uppermost in thought.

In the larger offices there are from six to ten editorial

staff writers who go to the editorial rooms daily. The editor has at command always a number of editorial writers who contribute in the line of their specialties—the writer on medical topics, the army and navy experts, the mechanical engineer, the man who is authority on geographical research, the expounder of financial and commercial topics, and so on. These men are useful adjuncts to the staff and they are in constant demand.

It is quite the practice for editorial writers to specialize on a few topics, to become office authority on them, to be able to explain, elucidate, construct, with that authority and conviction which expert knowledge alone can inspire—to assure the orator confidently that he has evaded the main question, to riddle the pretension of a dishonest promoter, or the fabrications of a fake explorer, or the vaporings of a scrubby scientist. The newspaper has to disclose the humbug of the world as well as its realities.

Just at the moment (1922) the world is in confusion in consequence of the great war and the expert writer is in demand to solve the problems growing out of a vast reconstruction. The writer who understands the fundamentals of diplomacy, or of trade and commerce, of government, of international law is welcome in newspaper offices. Moreover, it is cheering to recognize that you know as much about a given topic as does any one else.

To do editorial page writing is the ambition of nearly all young journalists. The office hours are fixed and short when compared with those of the rest of the

staff. The writer has more time for study and recreation. He has the satisfaction of doing the highest grade of newspaper work. His responsibility is not excessive for his articles are subject to revision and to criticism in advance of publication. It is clean, wholesome intellectual work with a minimum likelihood for mistake or error.

But, in the larger cities the editorial writer's work is anonymous. He is little known except by his associates, for the practice of signing editorial articles has not become common. The names of other writers are made conspicuous. The man who describes the financial situation, the bridge whist savant, some of the book reviewers, the playhouse critics, even the writers of base ball games and prize fights,—these are permitted to print their names at the head of their columns. Not so the editorial writers although they perform the highest service for the newspaper, doing the work requiring the most brains and the severest study. If one of them writes an especially noteworthy article the editor in chief quite likely gets the credit for it from the public.

Editorial writing requires a different literary touch from that of plain narration. It is harder to catch the knack of it. The special article or news report gives information only; the editorial article seeks to persuade, or explain, or amuse. It must attract the reader's attention and it is the writer's art of combining chat, information and opinion that accomplishes this result. Its opportunities for literary perfection are limitless. Every possible conceit, or trick of lan-

guage, argument, invective, ridicule, sarcasm, humor, frolic, pathos, every element that enters literature, may be indulged in, and the more striking the more successful.

Always the editorial article should have a purpose. Always exists the opportunity for nicety of language, for that use of words to befit the thought that constitutes good composition. The editorial writer must not forget that almost all readers seek to be amused rather than instructed.

"I had not thought of that before" is a common comment of the newspaper reader. But the editor had thought of it because he had been taught to think. He must be informed of the world's events and be prepared to tell the reader exactly what they mean.

Let it be impressed on the young man in journalism that he must learn to explain as well as to record. And let it be repeated that he must expect to think for that very large proportion of his readers who from lack of time and from force of habit and from inability because they have not practiced it, are unable, unaided, to diagnose and draw conclusions from the burning questions of the day. You cannot give better service than by explaining the alpha and the omega of important events.

CHAPTER V

WHAT TO PRINT—THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO INTEREST AND INFORM THE READER

In his meditations over newspaper possibilities the late Joseph Pulitzer found himself reasoning that the existing newspapers were written above the understanding of the multitudes and consequently were not read by them. Hundreds of thousands of the metropolitan district population read no daily newspaper because the prices of the sheets were high and because editorial utterances were "over their heads," were too profound, too argumentative, too scholarly. Mr. Pulitzer pictured to himself a newspaper so simple of speech and so simple of editorial expression that this vast population could understand it. He purchased the New York *World*, reduced its price, tried to make it appeal to the masses, and before long he had attained a very great circulation and a very great fortune.

Now, Mr. Pulitzer accomplished this result by contemplating his newspaper from the viewpoint of the reader rather than from that of the editor. He gave the people something they had wanted. Giving the public what it wants is the surest way of securing a horde of readers. His reading matter was mild; the typog-

raphy spectacular. He attracted attention with headlines a foot high and with letter press that looked like thickly woven barbed wire fence. One half the page was daubed with blotches of black type and the other half was smeared with red ink. But typographical eccentricity alone does little harm; it's a question of taste.

Mr. Pulitzer had made his great success on the lines indicated above and was breathing easily. It was not until another man came along who outdid Mr. Pulitzer in multiple exaggerations of the same game that the country saw the most riotous journalism ever known anywhere. Mr. Pulitzer's early efforts at sensationalism were as a smoking ash barrel when compared with the Vesuvius of volcanic flame and melted lava that followed. That Mr. Hearst would collect a bigger mob of readers was inevitable, but Mr. Pulitzer lost no readers and gained many. Both establishments kept up the contest as long as circulations continued to grow; but with the pause of the rocket rise things began to simmer down to a less spectacular splendor of insanity. The inflammation of the imagination subsided and gradually they approached the routine and the respectability of the other newspapers.

It was the same old story—the story so familiar to every journalist of ripening years—of building up a newspaper circulation by spectacular methods and then relapsing into ordinary goodness with a deliberation so gradual that the reader does not notice the change. For every editor knows that the more details of sin, vice, and crime he crams into his newspaper the more

copies of that newspaper will be sold; and every editor knows that the most subtle temptation that besets him is the temptation to print the things that should not be printed and that temptation is the more acute because he knows that the people want to read them. Aye! there's the rub! The people want the sensational stuff. The very sensational newspapers sell three or four times as many copies as do the conservative ones. The proportion is even larger in London and Paris. In our large cities almost all the newspapers of great circulation began the building up process by audacious sensationalism; as they became prosperous they became moderate.

Joseph Addison of long-ago literary fame recognized the public liking for sensation. He says in *The Spectator:* "At the same time I am very sensible that nothing spreads a paper like private calumny and defamation." And the Rev. Lyman Abbott, in rebuking the sensational press, was moved to remark: "Is the defense of the newspaper that it must give the public what it wants a good one? Most certainly no!—no more than the selling of whiskey, opium, stale fish or decayed vegetables. The editor is or ought to be a public teacher." The popular taste that demands this sensational sort of newspaper stimulant attracted the notice of Lafcadio Hearn, who remarks: "Everywhere there is a public of this kind to whom lacrimose emotion and mawkish sentiment give the same kind of pleasure that black, red, and blazing yellow give to the eyes of little children and savages."

Conversely, the *Christian Science Monitor* is read by

thousands of persons for the reason not so much that it represents a religious emotion as that it prints wholesome news free from spasm. "It reflects the true balance of the world's work and refuses to see only the evil and morbid happenings in it and let it appear that they are the preponderant forces of the world's efforts. Thus it emphasizes the decent things, the heroic things, the things worth while." With fairly good service the *Christian Science Monitor* presents the news of the day, and it especially appeals to parents who wish to keep the tart news reports of the secular press from their children.

What to print? That is a query that has disturbed many an editor's nightcap. So much depends on the editorial purpose. If the editor seeks to have a wholesome influence, seeks to do good, seeks a reputation for honesty of purpose and honesty of community service he naturally will stick to a conservative course; for somehow, exaggeration and sensationalism, not to mention falsehood, do not seem quite to harmonize with moral precepts; nor do they inspire confidence in the editor's influence. The conservative sheets are duller, but they are trusted the more—and public confidence is a mighty fine foundation on which to build a healthy circulation.

Many persons read the same newspaper for years and years. They become used to its ways, to its arrangement of news and topics; and they have confidence in its integrity. It comes to be almost a spiritual consolation to them. They swear by it and they believe in it just

as they believe in their pastor or their family physician. This is especially true of readers in the smaller cities and villages although it prevails everywhere. Now, it behooves the editor to nurse this attitude, for once it gets hold on a community it is hard to dislodge. It grows like a river after spring rains, slowly but surely increasing in volume and in strength. The people bought Greeley's *Tribune* because they believed that Greeley was honest. They were willing to be influenced by what he said. For the same reason Bowles's Springfield *Republican* became popular and prosperous. Throughout the country we have repeated instances of newspapers having the confidence of the community because they are honestly conducted.

The New York *Times* is perhaps our most gratifying exhibit of a newspaper advanced to supreme success by conservative methods. Free from exaggeration of statement, or typographical appearance, or hysteria of any sort, it has grown to great circulation and influence. Mr. Ochs planned this result on the theory of giving to each reader the things in which he was personally interested, printing the news in such volume as to attract a great variety of interests. The lawyer found the full court calendar, the real estate man a record of every sale, the sporting enthusiast the result of every game.

Reversal of political policy has damaged the prosperity of many a newspaper. In 1872 the New York *Tribune*, the Chicago *Tribune*, and the Cincinnati *Commercial Tribune*, that had built up large circulations

and had secured a profitable business as Republican newspapers, bolted the nomination of the Republican candidate, President Grant, and supported Horace Greeley, the Liberal Democratic nominee, for the presidency. They lost more than half of their readers.

In 1884, the New York *Times*, that always had been unflinchingly Republican, bolted the nomination of James G. Blaine and supported the candidacy of Grover Cleveland, the Democratic standard bearer. It lost half of its readers. In the same campaign, the *Sun*, of New York, that heretofore had favored the Democratic cause, bolted Cleveland. It lost more than half of its readers.

Many other instances of loss of circulation in consequence of change of political policy might be given. Newspaper editors of long memories expect popular resentment of a turn-coat policy and they give great consideration to any change before making it. No amount or degree of caressing talk or pussy-paw argument seems to soothe the man whose politics or religion has been attacked. Also, if you attack a man's politics or his religion you are likely to make that man your enemy—and almost every man has a trace of politics or religion in his makeup. He regards it as a personal assault on himself. He also resents criticism of a friend or of the object of his hero worship. The newspaper that attacked General Grant when Grant was the idol of the nation, when he was worshiped because he had led our armies to victory, that newspaper lost thousands of readers and its editor lost a host of

his personal friends. The newspaper that attacked the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher with more violence than did any other newspaper, at the time of the famous Beecher trial, lost three or four thousand of its readers a day while the attacks continued. The public had become greatly excited and divided over the question of Mr. Beecher's guilt or innocence. Neighbors shook fists in each other's faces on Brooklyn street corners and the angry controversy spread all over the country. The church people in general championed the pastor and their defense of him came at length, in a way, to be regarded as a defense of religion as well, and the newspaper assaults as an attack on religion.

We have said that it behooves the editor who has the confidence of his constituents to nurse that confidence —that a circulation based on confidence is not easily lost. Nevertheless, it is fatal to mislead the public. It is dangerous to circulation to go against public sentiment. A knowledge of public sentiment and the ability to anticipate public sentiment are brilliants, indeed, in the editor's jewelbox of sagacity.

The absolutely fearless editor who values his opinion more than he values his income, will slam into the public's most cherished notions if he thinks he is right. He will take a violent attitude on all public questions. The timid editor shuns controversy. His policy is to praise rather than to condemn. He fears unpopularity. He knows that to lambaste the city government is to lose the city printing. He strives to please everybody, to avoid antagonizing any large part of the com-

munity. The fearless editor disregards consequences; the timid editor avoids them.

Mr. Dana used to say: "We must make the paper talked about. We must make it more interesting. The people will not buy it if it is dull." Concerning a piece of inconsequential news that he had clipped from its columns he wrote: "This is not good. It is too commonplace. There is no poetry in it. A blockhead might have written it." He abhorred the commonplace. He urged constantly that minor routine news be put aside for anything bright or unusual, that verbal tediousness be hooted out of the place. He loved literature. He appreciated and praised good writing and he inspired his staff to enthusiasm for it, and to superexcellence of workmanship. Mr. Dana chose to lead public opinion rather than be led by it. He wrote with extraordinary forcefulness and with entire disregard, with absolute unconcern, as to the effect of his utterances on the circulation of the paper. Repeatedly he printed articles that he knew must cost him thousands of readers.

Greeley's idea was to print a newspaper of national importance and national influence; and that meant of course the printing of a lot of national politics. He sought to be a great political leader, to be the champion of his party. He was little interested as a journalist in the ordinary run of news.

Whitelaw Reid, who succeded Greeley as editor of the New York *Tribune*, once said: "The thing always forgotten by the closest critics of the newspapers is that the newspapers must be measurably what their

readers make them, what their constituents call for and sustain." Reid wished the *Tribune* to be of national importance. His remark naturally recalls the continuous performance discussion as to whether the newspapers lead the people or whether public opinion leads the newspapers. But we must agree, I am sure, that it is useless to give the people what they do not want.

How can we best interest the reader? People enjoy reading about the things in which they have participated. If you have attended a public meeting you follow with pleasure the newspaper report of that meeting. You are grateful to recognize things you remember the speaker to have said. If you have been to the theater you want to read a report or a criticism of the performance. You are pleased especially if the critic mentions some good or poor feature that you had noticed. It is a sort of verification of your judgment. You feel a sense of personal participation in the article. The same is true of the opera or a music event. All these things are constantly recurring, and reporters and critics are likely to become so familiar with them that their importance becomes obscured. This is true of opera and theater notices. The opera critic who has been listening to Faust for thirty years ceases to write much about it; but the young person who hears the opera for the first time is disappointed because so little is printed about the performance.

We are much more interested in accounts of the ball games, the prize fights, the contests of any sort that we have seen than we can be in those not seen.

To the man or woman in society the news of society

is infinitely more than mere gossip. The society man of any pretension must know what society folk are doing, must be informed of their every movement. His newspaper gives the hint for many letters. He must congratulate the family whose daughter's engagement is announced. He must sympathize with the bereaved. Society news has the personal note, and personalities sell newspapers. Cram your sheet with them, young man!

We are living in a commercial age, a money-making age. People are thinking as never before of money accumulation and business expansion. The journalistic tendency of the hour is to exalt the practical and minimize the sentimental. War has made us money mad. We note a growing fascination for articles of the practical, of how great fortunes are developed, of how money is made and lost, of how the poor become rich and the rich become poor—stories of business construction involving millions, of the application of invention to everyday needs. This kind of narrative includes the recital of personal successes, how the quick-witted boy becomes a captain of industry, how Nature's forces are utilized and Nature's secrets are turned to practical account. The details of how great success or great wealth has been achieved never have failed to fascinate mankind.

All fiction has been saturated with stories of money-seeking because the topic is so interesting. Nevertheless fiction can but feebly compete with the realities of the present. The tales of great gambling in Wall

Street, of card conquests at Monte Carlo, of new gold discoveries, of money made in real-estate speculations, of gigantic swindling operations, of big winnings on the racing track, of mental smartness in money-getting, of big success in any quest for cash—you cannot give the public too much of this kind of matter if you wish to sell your sheet.

But, if you ask me to describe the kind of news for which the people surge and struggle around the bulletin boards—the most popular kind of news printed anywhere—I must reply that it is found in the details of a conquest, a fight, whether between men with their fists, or dogs, or armies, politicians or polo players, football teams or racing horses, church choirs or kitchen cabinets.

I remember so well that in my boyhood days my own little village held its breath to await details of the world's champion prize fight between John C. Heenan, of America, and Tom Sayers, of England. Not since that day has interest in prize fights languished. The fist fight between John L. Sullivan and James Corbett quadrupled the circulation of next-day newspapers. Repeatedly the big New York Madison Square Garden has been crowded to its roof with enthusiasts who paid from fifteen to fifty dollars to see two men batter each other. Fifty thousand persons see the big football games, and fifteen millions read about them.

So great is the interest in baseball contests the newspapers are compelled to print from seven to ten columns a day in description of them. The same condi-

tions exist to a triflingly less degree only with contests in tennis, rowing, polo, yachting, horse racing, golf—any event, especially in athletics, involving a fight for supremacy. I know of one New York newspaper that confidently counts on an increase of eighteen or twenty thousand in circulation with the opening of the baseball season. There seems to be no limit to popular interest in the details of any kind of contest, especially one that has been lavishly advertised.

Business usually languishes every four years while the fight for the Presidency proceeds, and the newspapers print hundreds of columns about it. The squabbles, the encounters, the fights in sports, in business, in politics, in the courts, among doctors and educators, in the churches even—they all absorb the people almost to the limit of human interest. The young man in journalism should get wise to this interest.

Whatever is nearest the heart, whatever is uppermost in mind—that is what we want to read about. We are changeable creatures in thought, in purpose, and in habit. The new always is fascinating. The smart editor recognizes the love of change; accordingly he exalts the new. More than that, he anticipates interest that is to develop, foresees changes in government policies, the introduction of new methods, the outcome of scientific discovery. He prepares his readers accordingly.

Man's great interest is in his business, in his money-making. Frequently the newspapers are of especial service to him. In many lines of business they are a necessity. The manufacturer of goods, for instance,

searches every column for information bearing on the raw product that enters into them, the price, the supply, the demand, weather conditions that may influence, the condition and the cost of transportation, the effect of legislation, the menace of competition—anything that has influence on the making and delivery of his product. Quick information is priceless to him.

But interest in war surpasses all other attention, as it has from the beginning of man's mastery over man. It is difficult to recall any condition of human existence not affected by war. War is supreme as an agent of destruction. It destroys not only nations and governments, life and property, but also it blunts civilization, coarsens refinement, stops study and progress, prevents the fulfillment of life-cherished plans and ambitions, changes the life purpose of millions of men. It is entirely impossible to comprehend the multitudinous effects of war or to appreciate the condition of mind in which a stricken people emerge from war. The study of war gives the journalist exalted opportunity. His readers are interested in war more than in anything else.

Some folks delight in reading criticisms of their neighbors, attacks on public men or complaints of the conduct of mankind in general. This is a species of jealousy that rejoices in the discomfiture of others. They gloat over disclosures, get cynical over the downfall of public idols and the reversals of popular beliefs. Nothing pleases them more than to have a clergyman go astray or a church member get in jail.

They are fond of investigations. Their pinhead perceptions find nourishment in the mistakes of others. They always take the negative side. They question. They doubt. They lament. They scold.

It is easy for an editor to acquire this attitude. Many editors have assumed it, beginning with the notion of catering to people who like this sort of reading; then they gradually absorb the flavor. We have had the examples of ill-natured newspapers nicknamed by the public the "Growler," or the "Scold," or the "Old Pessimist." Not long ago several magazines sought fame and circulation by a conduct of criticism of public men called muckraking. The sale of thousands of copies attested general greed for that kind of reading. This public attitude certainly tempts the editor; but experience has taught that the public scold is vastly unpopular, be he editor, preacher, teacher or oracle of any sort.

And many are interested in reading about the weather. It is a universal topic of conversation. It governs our agricultural prosperity. It influences every kind of business. It stops the ball games. It parches our soil, interferes with our plans, disturbs our comfort, upsets mental processes, compels us to change our clothing when we do not want to. It makes us wear clumsy things on our feet. It raises the very mischief in a hundred different ways. Everybody thinks of it or speaks of it twenty times a day. The wise editor will print a fine fat paragraph about it, describing the weather over all this broad land, giving the prac-

tical, the scientific reasons for its varied changes, and explaining the indicated effect on trade, travel, and temperament.

What shall we print? A California newspaper sought through a questionnaire to learn from its readers how much of the sheet they actually read. It summarized the eighteen hundred replies. Seventy-five per cent attested that the reader looked at the headlines and rarely finished the article; only twenty-five per cent ever read an article through. One answer said, "I go beyond the headline once in ten times, perhaps, but when I do I read it through." Still another, "I usually find all I want in the first paragraph." The net result seemed to indicate that almost all simply scanned the sheet in search of something to interest them, and found little. The chief criticism was that the articles were too long.

The Paris daily publications before the war minimized the news and in its place presented discussion and comment, sketchy description, much fiction and literary matter. They achieved enormous circulations. The most successful were exceedingly well written, were distinctly literary; and they prospered greatly without the aid of news features of the American and English journalistic sort. They were made attractive and interesting by their excellence of workmanship.

The New York *Evening Journal* was carried to enormous circulation by editorial presentation rather than news exploiting. For many years it had neither the Associated Press nor any other news association

service. Its editorial utterances attracted far reaching attention. What news it had was emphasized by exaggeration and breathless anouncement, and typographical monstrosity.

The *Evening Sun*, which never had the Associated Press dispatches, attained great popularity and circulation through cheerful, bright, and witty illumination of things, and a minimum of profundity.

In a newspaper address before the Convocation of the University of the State of New York, Mr. Don Seitz, of the New York *World*, said:

> Talent was the thing in the old days, but we have gotten over that, alas! Energy has taken the place of talent and the sudden fact has taken the place of the news. The modern editor has been misled somehow into using a great deal of display type to handle the few words he uses, and at first I had the thought that this was wrong. But somehow I have changed my mind. It is necessary to arouse interest. The vast number of readers are rudimentary in thought. They do not take easily to a dull solid column no matter how interesting it may be. In trying, therefore, to catch the largest number of readers the editor conceived the idea of putting in larger type. It has shown what the people wanted, and that they must have some quick way of learning what was going on, and mind you, we have shortened up our reading time a great deal, which is another fact.

With many people newspaper reading becomes a fixed habit. They come to enjoy their favorite publication just as they enjoy food and sleep. It gives them topics for thought and conversation. They become

interested in its features, in the "colyum" of fun and chat and josh that has become so popular, in the illustrated comic strips that started with Foxy Grandpa and have come to include Percy and Ferdie, Bringing up Father, Mutt and Jeff, and the rest of the jolly folk. Constant reading about them brings a feeling of personal acquaintance with them and the habit of seeking for them. They help amazingly to draw readers and to retain them. The newspaper habit is to be encouraged and these features help to fix it. There can be no doubt of the popularity of the medical column, of the puzzle department, of the question and answer feature, and of the other like things that serve to amuse the reader.

Parents seek topics, also, that will interest the children, simple and childlike though they be. It is amusing to note how interested older people get in articles on important subjects written down to a child's understanding. Somebody is going to make a fortune sometime by printing a children's newspaper giving the news and the questions of the day in language and thought that children can understand. "Grown-ups" will appreciate it quite as much as will the youngsters.

Just how much of exaggeration and feverish language and typographical eccentricity to inject into the sheet always puzzles the editor. He is tempted by public demand for it, yet he does not want a reputation for sensationalism.

The hysteria of the sensational newspaper may not be of harm to a young person who reads it casually.

But suppose she, the shop girl for instance, acquires the habit of reading it every day. Because of her employment, or her environment, she has not time or opportunity to read anything else. She comes to think and to talk in its exaggerated, inflamed, feverish language. Its typographical, breathless announcements startle her—fill her with feverish emotions. She becomes a pessimist, for in the sensational sheet the true, the good, the normal are ignored. "Virtue go hang; vice is the thing that attracts attention" is the motto. The maiden is fed on the abnormal, the unusual, on mental monstrosities, and fancies. It influences her life.

It was said not so very long ago that ten years of cheap reading had changed the British from the most stolid nation of Europe to the most hysterical and theatrical. Be this as it may: habitual cheap reading must of necessity produce cheap thinking, and cheap expression of thought, and consequently cheap moral conduct. It is in this direction that the sensational press and the cheap literature of the day have their chief influence. Cheap literature produces cheap mentality and, therefore, a cheap people.

In defense of sensationalism it is urged that you cannot arouse the interest of the ignorant man by ordinary methods of speech. His mind is too sluggish to comprehend it as ordinarily spoken. He can appreciate big headlines and lurid catch words and they attract him.

I have lingered over these things in somewhat prosy manner, perhaps, but if you are going into the news-

paper business I know of little more important than real study of what to print. The practical newspaper man thinks of it by the hour. The good newspaper is not the product of chance. Every phase of life is thought out and its relation to public interest is weighed. Public interest changes almost daily. It must be studied, must be anticipated, must be prepared for.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLEASING EXPERIENCES OF THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

The post of foreign correspondent is sought eagerly by newspaper men. The work is interesting and agreeable and the experience is invaluable. It gives opportunity for foreign travel and for that mental enrichment through study and observation that cannot be experienced elsewhere. The correspondent is removed from the constriction of home office discipline and office tradition and the everlasting admonition to "hurry up." In times of war his work is strenuous, of course, and highly important, and entirely different from his activities in times of peace.

The more important American newspapers have a representative in the chief capitals of Europe, some of them in two or three cities, others in London alone. These men send important news by cable and correspondence by mail and it is their privilege to select their own topics, largely. Thus they prove or disprove their possession of that rare quality of journalistic excellence: the ability to judge what will be interesting or important to the far-distant reader. In the newspaper office at home the writer usually writes to order

on an indicated subject and often without regard to his own notion of whether the topic is interesting or not. The foreign correspondent must judge for himself what to send. But his field is large, his opportunities are many, and he comes to love the work because it is so fascinating. He writes of the great questions that are moving Europe, of the coronation of kings, the collapse of cabinets, the burial of popes, the birth and life and death of revolutions, of social life, of political life, of artistic life, the triumphs of science, invention, and discovery. The treasuries of the Old World invite his study. Its follies, frivolities, foibles and fashions tempt to his amusement. He has a mighty good time over there.

But, when he begins to send cablegrams to his newspaper he encounters a situation that appeals to his business manager as well as to the reading public, for the cost of cable messages is great. Seven cents a word for those that take their time and twenty-five cents for those that are to be rushed—and columns to be filled. Here is where judgment as to what to send, cunning in condensing, skill in skeletonizing combine to reap reward.

For more than twenty years the ordinary press rate for cable messages ranged between five and ten cents a word. Some little time before the war the wireless telegraph people delivered reports for five cents, but without assurance of prompt service. The system had not been made so perfect as it is now and its operation was not entirely satisfactory. Then the war stopped its

use for newspaper purposes. It has been resumed recently at the five-cent rate, messages to be delivered within twenty-four hours. The cable companies made some attempt to meet this price before the war, but not much came of it. Ten cents a word for the regular message and twenty-five for the expedited dispatch was the price for a long time. The expedited message was the message sent immediately without any delay. The ordinary message was taken without assurance of quick delivery. During the war rates varied. The cables were crowded and the newspapers were compelled to use the expedited messages. At one time the cost of this message was thirty-three cents a word.

Since the war something like the old rates have been restored. Just now they are seven cents for the ordinary report. The expedited message arrangement is no longer offered; but, by making the report a commercial message, at commercial rates of twenty-five cents, the newspaper article takes its turn for transmission. This means that the commercial message is used, commonly, for the newspaper cannot wait. It cannot risk missing the news through delay. Money is lost on the news-report delivered after the sheet has gone to press.

Experience has attested that code or cipher messages are not practical for newspaper purposes, The opportunity for error is too great and too much time is required for translation. But experience has taught, also, the use of certain prefixes and suffixes and jugglings by which much may be expressed in few words. It is a simple system of skeletonizing, easy of translation

into the finished product. The plan depends largely on complete understanding between the sender abroad and the cable editor in the home office.

The London man sends newspaper clippings by mail of events that are likely to figure or reappear in future news, programs of coming happenings like coronations, or festivals, or ceremonials, descriptions of ships about to be launched, or buildings to be dedicated, inaugurations, pageants, with all of the plans, arrangements, and the names of persons who are to participate, and the like. When the event happens he cables, for instance: "Madrid Alfonso crowned unchange." "Unchange" means that the coronation of the Spanish king was solemnized without change of program, that the matter sent in advance by mail may be used with what the correspondent now cables. The cable editor in America writes from what the correspondent sends, and from the program slips, a report of the coronation, embellishing it perhaps with a few lines here and there about the cheering multitudes, the elaborate decorations, and the other things that obviously add splendor to every coronation of a king. The cable editor knows right well that if the crowds were sullen or the decorations were lacking or the soldiers did not strut and shout, the correspondent surely would say so. The correspondent is keen to notice any deviation from the program and to cable details of the change. The editor at this end pads out the skeleton report into readable narrative with no intention of deceiving anybody.

Newspaper descriptions of the doings of men in public life, or who in any manner attract public attention, are mailed to the home office and they are of frequent use when the man reappears in the news in any way. A few years ago one Barnard Barnato made fame for himself by getting a great fortune through South Africa diamond mine operations, and newspaper cuttings exploiting him were in every office. One night a cable message floated into New York which ran:

"Barnato homing Unicorn suicided overboard off Gibraltar." From these seven words and his newspaper slips and his general knowledge of Barnato the cable editor constructed an article of a third of a column or so in length which said that Barnard Barnato, the widely celebrated South African diamond king, who recently had visited his famous mines a few miles north of Cape Town, met his death by suicide, while returning to his home in England, by leaping overboard from the Royal Line steamship the *Unicorn* when the vessel was off port of Gibraltar, etc., etc. And the account included a description of the victim of self-destruction, his vast operations, his family and business associations, and other things about Barnato that supposedly might interest a reader.

Again, there comes a message dated London which reads:

Reading Readingess New Yorkward safternoon Philadelphia untalk peace undenied gravity Russian.

From his knowledge of the diplomatic situation and of current events, and from his bunch of newspaper cut-

tings the foreign editor finds it quite easy to construct a fat paragraph to run something like:

London—Lord Reading, the newly appointed Ambassador to represent Great Britain in the United States, sailed for New York this afternoon in the steamship *Philadelphia.* On arrival he will proceed immediately to Washington to enter upon his duties. This is Lord Reading's third visit to America. He was sent by his government two years ago on a special mission and was in Washington for two months or more. He is accompanied by his wife. He refused to express an opinion as to the propects for peace, but would not deny the gravity of the situation in Russia.

In the above skeleton dispatch the word "Readingess" means Lady Reading. The addition of "ess" to a man's name designates his wife.

Again came one evening a London message that began:

Pm commons duohours restating aims intended Russian Bolsheviki but principally allies position to labor urged ongo warwin quote

"Pm" means Great Britain's Prime Minister whoever he happens to be. This message was written out to say that Lloyd George had addressed a meeting of the House of Commons for two hours that evening restating the war aims of the allies. Ostensibly he was speaking for the benefit of the Russians, but it was plain that he was addressing the labor party of the Empire in particular, and that the Government urged the labor party to push on and help to win the war. "Quote" meant that what was to follow was

a verbatim report of what the Prime Minister said and was to be preceded by quotation marks.

Close skeletonizing of this sort is used for short and comparatively unimportant news announcements. It cannot be used to advantage in long narration, in explanation of political complications, or reports of consequence. But in minor messages it is of frequent use by news associations and by correspondents. It is an entirely legitimate practice since it involves no misstatement of fact. It is simple, as may be seen, and the knack of using it is easily acquired. Yet obviously the more ingenuity and skill employed the greater will be the saving at seven cents or twenty-five cents a word. The difference in its skillful and its indifferent use amounts to thousands of dollars in a year.

In times of war the cost of news transmission by cable is enormous. Repeatedly in the late conflict it reached thousands of dollars for the description of a single battle, or a movement. At times these costly dispatches were sent day after day. In our war with Spain when reports were sent by dispatch boats to Kingston, Jamaica, for transmission hence by cable, as much as two dollars a word was paid for sending them to South American and Isthmus stations, hence north through Texas. The direct cable from Kingston to Halifax was constantly crowded. The South American route was the only other available outlet and it was used freely.

The special foreign correspondent does not concern himself greatly with routine news: the press associations look after that. The difference in time permits

the sending of all news appearing in London editions to American newspapers of the same corresponding edition, morning or evening. The London papers are on the street at two o'clock in the morning, which is eleven o'clock or before midnight in New York.

The correspondent seeks rather to elucidate the news or to send exclusive information. He finds the getting of intelligence much more difficult than in America. Public men are less willing to furnish information. The newspaper man is not so welcome. Doors are closed to him that would be flung open here. To a yet greater degree than here he must gain the confidence and the intimate acquaintance of those who are original sources of information, the confidence of the men who are conducting public affairs. The correspondent may not always print what he learns for he must not make public that which is told to him in confidence. But sooner or later it is of much value to him. The ability to secure the attention and the confidence of public men is the correspondent's or the news gatherer's choicest asset. It is absolutely necessary to success in higher grade reportorial work.

The foreign correspondent, more than any other writer off the editorial page, is permitted to assume an editorial attitude toward important events. He may comment and seek to persuade in editorial fashion. His articles are the more interesting in consequence, for not any newspaper writing is more attractive to the general reader than that which contains narrative description with running comment.

The French journalists are adepts at this work.

Many of their publications contain no editorial articles after the English or the American fashion. They treat an important event rather as a semi-news semi-editorial review article—an article of news with interjected comment, with expression of opinion as suits the writer's fancy or belief or prejudice.

In American newspapers of high grade the reporter is not permitted to comment or inject opinion or seek to influence the reader; he must not depart from the cold facts of narration. No comment outside the editorial page is the rule. The foreign correspondent is excepted from this requirement and the Washington man partly so.

Not any other kind of newspaper work gives more useful experience. The foreign correspondent must understand the great events that are moving Europe. When it is possible he goes to the scene of the occurrence for first-hand information. The great disaster by earthquake that destroyed Messina sent half of the correspondents scurrying from London into Italy. The election of a new Pope finds them in Rome. A revolution in Poland discloses them on the spot delving into the secrets of the leaders. Since the great war they have been constantly in every capital in Europe as some new development of finance, or a startling revelation of starvation, insurrection, or political plot demanded their presence. They watch the activities of a dozen nations. A few years of this sort of thing gives them valuable knowledge.

CHAPTER VII

THE TECHNICAL PRESS

As our young man in journalism begins to get a reputation among his fellows for sincere trustworthy work his services may be sought by other editors. Hundreds of miscellaneous weekly and monthly publications employ writers and they draw largely from the daily newspaper staffs. More than one thousand persons employed regularly in New York City furnish the copy for these miscellaneous journals. Nearly as many more are occasional or special contributors. There are scores of magazines of fiction and scores of weekly journals devoted to literature, religion, fashions, humor, science, art, music and the play-house, to sports, birds, and beasts, and fish.

There are journals devoted to the learned professions, to medicine, law, chemistry, engineering, theology, electricity. And there are hundreds of technical publications and trade papers that cater to the interests of all kinds of business: banking, insurance, shipping, manufacturing, railroading, dry goods, textile, grocery, hardware, wines, spirits, liqueurs, drugs. Almost every occupation has some sort of a publication to advance its interests. Many of them are prosperous

and some of them are "gold mines" for their owners. Almost all are very helpful to the trade they represent. They expand in vast detail the things that the daily newspapers pass by with mere mention or do not mention at all. They tell the reader what the other fellow is doing. They cunningly search the entire world for facts bearing on the business they represent. Their representatives in Washington, and at every state capital, inform of any proposed legislation hostile to their clients' interests—restriction of trade, increased taxation, regulation of methods, legislative strikes or blackmailing raids.

In the editorial columns are discussed every phase of business that could affect the readers' business and the news columns give every obtainable fact, including columns of routine record such as price list quotations, statistics of merchandise movement, government reports of agricultural and metal production, and the like.

A vast volume of technical matter is required to fill these publications, the writing of which calls for expert and special knowledge and continuous study. The writer's task is difficult for the reason that he is not writing for the general public, but rather for men who already have comprehensive knowledge of the subject and who instantly detect misstatement of fact or feebleness of reasoning. Nevertheless, the writer appreciates that his business-man reader is keenly alive to know the doings of his rivals who may be smarter and more successful than himself and who are working to solve the same problems as himself.

Writing for the technical press is not so fascinating as for the newspapers, the literary weeklies, or the magazines of fiction. The imagination has less opportunity to frolic. Facility of literary expression is not an asset. The embryos of inspiration and ambition are incubated elsewhere. Constant consideration of the one topic tempts to routine thought and to imitative writing.

Nevertheless, writing for the technical press involves most careful and painstaking effort. It will not do to make a mistake. Some of the accomplishments to be desired in the writer are indicated in an address delivered by Mr. Charles W. Price, editor of the *Electrical Review:*

Accuracy in technical statements and simplicity of language are two elements of greatness and distinction in technical journalism. It is not always easy for the abundantly informed technical writer to present his scientific truths in simple limpid language to be comprehended by and thus delight and enlighten the average reader. I am now referring to editorial treatment of such subjects, and not of course to those technical contributions in which mathematical figures necessarily must appear. The editor or technical writer who can present scientific reasoning and its practical application accurately and simply without the aid of his algebra, is assured of the largest possible audience, and is the producer of the greatest influence and information. He is, besides, popular in technical publishing circles.

Another element of greatness is a practical illuminating presentation of what an invention in the field of which that publication is the exponent, really means to the art to which it relates; that when an invention of importance is announced, it be told just what it would mean and how it

might or will affect the art or the industry. But the technical writers who can state a scientific fact in a few words and with crystal clearness are not very numerous.

The electrical reviews may be mentioned as a fair example of technical journalism. They are large publications of a hundred pages or so, half of which are given to advertisements of every electrical apparatus or machine known to man. The electricians do not advertise in the daily newspapers, nor do the newspapers print the news of the electrical business except when some big discovery is made. No way exists, therefore, for the electrician to know what is going on in his business except through an electrical review. There he gets not only every treasure of discovery, but every flash, every twinkle of the business as well. He may learn what all the electric societies are doing in all parts of the world. He may read the lectures on electrical subjects delivered by experts. He may be told just what the great electrical companies are doing, what new construction they are planning or finishing. It is a constantly growing and changing business with every day new application of old discoveries as well as new ones. He simply cannot be without an electrical review.

In New York City are forty-five publications devoted to drugs, medicine and surgery. Many of them are for the drug trade only and others are highly intellectual reviews of progress and practice in medical science. They are little read except by physicians, surgeons and druggists; but of late years, so bewilder-

ingly fascinating have been their disclosure of medical discovery and progress and so absorbing their illustrations of surgical skill, the daily newspaper editors have been compelled to read them searchingly for the news they contain, and they have been generously quoted in the daily press. The medical press exploits all that is new in surgery or practice, gives elaborate reports of medical society discussions, descriptions of unique surgical operations, new uses of drugs. It digs up everything all over this earth that possibly could interest a practitioner. Obviously the physician or surgeon who doesn't read the medical literature of the day is miles behind the times.

Even the newspaper business has its trade journals, and one of them, *The Fourth Estate*, was saying the other day that between seven thousand and seven thousand five hundred persons are actively engaged in writing for the New York City press; and that thirty-five thousand are similarly employed in the United States.

It is quite impossible, in this space, to describe these miscellaneous and class publications. They are numbered by thousands. In New York City are more than one hundred literary magazines and weeklies. A recent tabulation attested that in the United States more than eight hundred publications are devoted to religion, of which about one hundred are printed in New York. Six hundred are issued to tell the farmer how to till. Eighty exploit automobiles. How to fly is told by six sheets. The mouthpieces of the barbers number four and the blind may learn about themselves in eleven.

Eighteen appear regularly in the interest of the American Indian, and six for bees. More than six hundred tell about schools and colleges; twenty about dogs; twelve about confections and ice-cream; twenty-three of dentistry; twenty-six of the theater; fifty of fashion; ninety of finance, of which thirty are in New York. The grocers support eighty odd and the insurance men sixty-seven, while two hundred and fifty are in the interest of labor. We find devoted to law one hundred and fifty; to liquor twenty-seven; mechanics and engineering sixty-five; moving pictures twenty; music trade fifty-four; the negro about two hundred; poultry eighty-five; soap and perfume three; sports seventy; women suffrage seven; undertakers ten. One of the newspaper directories recently gave a list of two hundred and forty-five trades or businesses each of which has its own technical publications.

The trade papers have come to form a very important and conspicuous part of American journalism. Their writers may not be so well known to fame as are other authors, but they have better business opportunities. Their expert knowledge of the business under consideration and the acquaintances they necessarily form with the kings of that business, frequently lead to advantageous offers to engage in business. A larger proportion of the technical press men quit writing to do other work than is noted in any other line of journalism.

The business of furnishing information about business has become a great industry in itself. It has de-

veloped amazingly within a few years, chiefly through the technical journals or magazines, the number of which has increased greatly, but also through books and pamphlets.

The big banks have their business libraries totalling thousands of volumes, covering endless topics relating to railroads, corporations, specific business, systems and methods. They preserve newspaper clippings in bewildering numbers. The bureau of information is conspicuous in all big business houses and corporations and all the literature of business is at hand. Every Wall Street brokerage house of any account employs a man to furnish information to customers.

The great war so effectively restricted importation that the country was largely thrown on its own resources. It was compelled to produce or furnish substitute matter for many products it could not import. Business facts became greatly in demand. The librarians reported, and continue to note, a greatly increased demand for business literature. The book publishers recognize an increasing devouring public appetite for business books. The managers of business journals and magazines tell of largely increasing circulations in this period of great business expansion.

One of the managers of the *System* magazine series said not long ago:

> The demand for our publications has increased tremendously since the war. In the last three years one of our magazines has increased sixty per cent in circulation. Blame Germany for that, and for the big increase in business

literature. We have learned suddenly that German business has been studying books all these years. We find now that to compete, American business must also take to books. And that has brought about one big difference. A few years ago when I left college to go into business, my employers encouraged me with, "Well, you'll live down your college training." To-day, a big business man does more reading than a student in college—and he has to do it.

Technical journalism is a great feature of the journalism of the times. Its importance is little appreciated or understood by the general public. It gives employment to thousands of writers and its rapid increase indicates demand for thousands more.

Trained newspapermen are in active demand as publicity and general aids by big corporations. The salaries paid are larger than is paid by newspapers. These men usually oversee the advertising; likewise they write pamphlets, collect information for the use of the corporation, frequently prepare speeches for delivery by the officers, make out reports, read many publications for any information bearing on the business. The work requires fine editorial ability and thorough knowledge of the business. It is far above the press agent work done to advertise theaters, moving pictures, or hotels. It involves a study of the principles and condition of other business besides their own, for in many instances their own business is affected by the business of others. The literature of business has become very important.

Accuracy is the supreme requirement in business writing. A single misstatement may involve a loss of

confidence in the writer or the publication—a loss of money to the reader. Simple construction in the plainest of language is the rule for writing.

Demand for the literature of business has made startling changes in the newspapers of to-day, affecting daily sheets as well as all journalism. Ten times as much space is given to market reports as was used forty years ago. Business news is lavishly exploited. It was little noticed in the old days.

It is a business age. The educational impulse of school and college is in the direction of business education rather than classical or general education. Technical schools are much more popular. Business schools are conducted by large corporations, by banks, by chambers of commerce. Banks, insurance companies, the railroad organizations, and big business concerns maintain statistical and information departments and publish pamphlets and periodical literature. Men competent to produce information are in demand and those of newspaper experience are preferred.

Publishers are putting out an avalanche of books on every phase of business. The demand for books of reference, books of the practical, in our libraries is overwhelming. Reports of the New York Public Library attest that seekers after books of technical information are numbered by hundreds of thousands.

Nearly all of the men who are furnishing this greatly increased volume of business information have had daily newspaper office experience. In looking through the lists of technical journals printed in New York I see

the names of dozens of men as their editors whom I recognize as former daily newspaper men. They now have permanent and responsible posts at reasonably remunerative salaries. The work is not so continuously exacting as that required in the minor places in the newspaper. The hours of toil are shorter, are in the middle of the day, and are omitted on holidays and Sundays. These are important considerations to the man who elects to live by writing information.

CHAPTER VIII

THE VILLAGE NEWSPAPER'S IMPORTANT PLACE IN AMERICAN JOURNALISM

The young man about to start on a journalistic career should give long thought to the village newspaper. Our schools of journalism are graduating thousands of boys who intend to be editors. A few of them only can be taken on the big newspapers for their staffs are full to overflowing always. It is difficult, indeed, for a young man to get a place on a big city newspaper and the prizes are few if he does get it. Let us see what the small town newspaper offers.

In the big cities nearly all writers are employees. The managing editor is employed to direct the staff and to carry out the owners' policies. Editorial writers are employed to write. They have no pecuniary interest in the property. In small cities the editors are part owners frequently; in the villages they are the full owners almost always.

For the so-called great newspaper the staff writes to order. The subjects are assigned and the treatment is indicated by the editor. The policy of the sheet toward the important questions of the day is under-

stood and respected by all. Independence of thought is not supposed or permitted to disport itself from that policy. All articles are closely revised by some one else after the writer has finished with them. They are made to conform to established policy, precedent and practice. This tends to routine treatment rather than to bursts of originality. It influences to dull writing. The knowledge that his work is to be revised is repressive rather than stimulating to the writer. If changes in his article are frequent he chafes and frets, imagines that injustice is being done to him, gets discouraged and unhappy.

The personality of the general writers for the press in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, is known to a few of their associates only—is unknown to the general public. Indeed, it would puzzle even newspaper men to name the editors in chief and the managing editors of the morning and afternoon sheets in New York City, although many of them, of course, are known to almost everybody.

In the small cities, and especially in the villages, these conditions are in exact reverse. The editor owns his newspaper. He is known personally or by reputation to almost every member of the community. He may write as he pleases on any topic, about anything, about anybody. He may praise his friends or lambaste his enemies; may be brilliantly original or stupidly conservative or hopelessly imitative. He is of great community influence and importance. Not even the village clergyman is more so. He is made much of at

all gatherings and is welcomed wherever he goes. The huntsman brings him bags of game; the gardener refreshes him with the earliest tender vegetables; his table is spread with the choicest of juicy fruits.

The writers for the big newspapers discourse on topics of national importance—topics that are supposed to interest the masses. Rarely do they write about people they know or have met unless they are doing reportorial work. The village editor busies himself chiefly with matters of concern to his community alone. His references to national topics may be few. Of his own people he may write with a sympathetic personal interest born of close contact with them, with knowledge of their whims, their excellences, their deficiencies, and their wants. His purpose is to interest them. He knows that they are more interested in themselves and in each other than in anything else.

A considerable proportion of village folks and farmers now take a daily paper from the nearest city of size. This daily sheet covers national and world-wide topics so completely that the weekly cannot compete with it advantageously in these lines. But the daily sheet cannot compete with the weekly in the printing of those delicious little intimacies of village life that most of all do interest the villager. The oft repeated assertion that the daily newspaper is running out the weekly is untrue.

If the village editor chooses to do so he may achieve a supremely satisfying influence. He is the spokesman of the community, voicing its sentiments, explaining its

needs, defending its rights. He may render it extreme service by appealing to outside interests in praise of its enterprises, its attractions, its prosperity. He may assist it immeasurably by helping to organize and sustain its protective associations, its commercial leagues, its welfare organizations, study clubs and charity circles. He may encourage community pride. If he praises Deacon Stevenson for the beauty of his lawn and floral effects the deacon's neighbors are sure to make rival lawns. The editor may urge to clean village morals as well as to clean streets and tidy door yards. He may create public sentiment and ripen patriotic spirit and be the moral and the intellectual force of the region. He may lead in all things.

The village editor may make himself beloved by his people. His relation to them is that of close intimacy. He may print the good things they say, may reproduce their ideas as well as describe their doings. He records the important events of their lives, the details of their successes, the parts they take in public affairs.

He welcomes the babies as they are born and wishes them their full share of all the good things this Jolly Old Earth has to give. He joins in congratulations, felicitations and joyful vociferations to bewildered brides and grinning bridegrooms. And when the hand of death is laid, he reverently and tenderly recalls that the summons must come to all sometime; and he sorrows and grieves with those on whom affliction has fallen.

The city newspaper is heartless when domestic scandals or business irregularities are under public consideration. It has no thought of lessening personal sorrow. The country editor reasons something like this: "I do not pretend to print all the news of this community. My readers are all known to me and are personal friends. They help me in my business. Why should I print stuff that will give them pain or sorrow? I am under no obligation to print anything about anybody. My newspaper is conducted as a business proposition. I am responsible for what it says and it is not any one's business what I print. I am personally interested in community interests and I wish to advance them always; but I do not care to mix in my people's personal quarrels or their domestic affairs unless community interests are involved. Why should I? Some people seem to think that I should print everything about everybody—except themselves. There is a certain element in every community that rejoices in other people's discomfiture and I do not wish to cater to that feeling."

Not only does every one in the community read the community paper, but every young man and every young woman brought up there subscribe for it when going to live elsewhere. It comes as an intimate letter from the old home, and nothing can be too trivial or too unimportant to interest them so long as it relates to somebody or something they have known in the days of their youth—the bursting of the old dam, the fall of the old chimney, the burning of the old

academy, or of the old mill, the marriages, the deaths, the activities of former playmates in political, business or social life, anything pertaining to the old home town, anything that recalls the scenes of childhood, the memories of youth—all are of absorbing interest.

Not long ago the editor of the Fulton (N. Y.) *Patriot* made a big hit by getting a lot of the people who had moved away to write reminiscences of their early life in Fulton. Almost all of the writers were remembered by the home readers and the letters made much talk. Every error was pounced on and letters of correction started controversy. People involved in the talk were pleased. Members of the human family like to see their names in the newspapers.

But the editor should have ambitions and missions far beyond mere village gossip. The small towns of the Eastern states have become centers in which endless varieties of manufactured goods are turned out, and it is up to the editor to exploit every new thing connected with the raw material and with the making and the marketing of the product in which the community is interested. The middle-state towns are given largely to manufacturing on a larger scale, to coal and coke and oil industries, to steel, to the making of machinery. The editor should furnish all possible information. The South with its cotton, sugar, and tobacco is an especially interesting field for community specializing.

But greater than these is that vast industry spreading from the Atlantic to the Pacific in which one half

of the nation's population is interested because dependent on it—agriculture. Now, of the sixteen thousand weekly newspapers printed in the United States more than ten thousand are published in rural communities—in villages where the prosperity of doctors, lawyers, merchants, tradesmen, schools and churches depends on the prosperity of the farmer. Nearly every farmer takes a journal devoted to agriculture; but farming conditions vary greatly in different regions, and the village editor who can furnish real information to the farmer of his immediate neighborhood will perform the most valuable sort of community service. The average man is more interested in his business than in anything else. He delights to read about it.

The editor's greatest concern should be to serve the interests of his parish. The people look to him for leadership and help. They want the community exploited. They want their share of everything going. They want the prices of their products kept up and their taxes kept down. They want good roads, good schools, good markets, attractive churches. And they appreciate an excellent newspaper. There are hundreds of villages and hamlets, especially in the South and in the West, that are far removed from any large city. Their inhabitants lose interest in the doings of the great outside world, but their own needs are sensed with no shallow understanding.

Village life throughout our country is taking on the attractions of intellectual uplift and refinement that long have been the pride and the boast of New Eng-

land communities. The New England village, made attractive by its imitation of the beautiful village of Old England, has spread far across the continent. Poets and story tellers have idealized its shady streets, gilded its church spires and praised its intelligence with every felicity of language. It has its libraries, its study clubs, its improvement associations, its lecture courses, its high schools, its churches, its every facility for liberal education. Usually there is a college close at hand.

It is something of a fad at the moment for our young writers of novels to exaggerate the repulsive features of the American village, to magnify its unpleasant aspects, to ignore its excellences. But just as the measure of a man's greatness should rest on his highest achievements rather than on his lowest, so should the beauty of a village be judged by its tidy lawns, its fragrant flower gardens, its artistic vistas of shaded streets, instead of by its back yards, its ash and garbage heaps, and its dumps for old tin cans. The degree of its intelligence and refinement should include the people of education and culture in the measurement as well as the louts, the clowns and the vulgar ignorant.

The modern village has many of the essential advantages possessed by the city: facilities for the development of intellectual life, for study, for personal ease and comfort, for the enjoyment of social life. You have a more wholesome existence; live a little nearer to nature; your friendships are finer and more

lasting. Your very environment persuades to a greater appreciation of community comradeship.

Printing a newspaper here offers a fascinating and a fairly profitable career to the young man just quitting his studies. Electricity and gasoline have greatly increased the pleasures of village life, have literally transformed rural regions by giving quick communication with business and social and intellectual centers. Modern devices have bereft life there of much of its old-time drudgery. The people are wide awake. Their general intelligence is quite equal to the general intelligence of city people.

Likewise, the newspapers are much improved. Modern printing machinery and facilities have removed irksome processes. Editorial associations and the technical newspaper press have inspired to higher ideals. The business has become standardized on a higher plane of excellence. Many of our high schools and almost all of our colleges have courses in journalism. Their educational influences are reflected already in the country newspapers, especially in the West. The state universities of Missouri, Kansas and Minnesota, for instance, have sent hundreds of young men back to their villages to do journalistic work. The leaven of preparation is working wonders.

Moreover, success in village or small town journalism frequently leads to success in big cities. The editors of big city newspapers are overwhelmed with candidates for a place on the staff, but the applicants usually are unknown beginners, and they are rejected. But

the village editor of real ability cannot hide his light; his good work attracts attention. The managers of the great journals seek men of superior quality and ask them to join the newspaper staff. Hundreds of the finest editors in this country started or matured on our rural newspapers. Good newspaper work, whether in city or country, attracts attention and is sure of reward.

The village editor's task is not easy. He writes almost all of the edition and conducts the business end as well. His editorial page may reflect his fancy for little or much comment, but he naturally will have one article in each edition on a subject of national importance and two or three relating to community interests. He will compile from the daily sheets a column or two of the most important news of the world and will clip from the exchanges interesting miscellaneous matter, paragraphs and articles. He will encourage his readers to write letters to the editor for publication, and these he will revise and prepare. He will have a news correspondent in every neighboring hamlet, and this news must be revised and made ready to print. His neighborhood news is of vital importance for his villagers know almost all of the inhabitants for miles around.

But his chief task is to be found in the collecting and writing of so-called local news. The very life of his sheet depends on this information. To gather it involves constant, painstaking toil. He has to hunt for it, has to mingle with the people in the search for it.

The measure of his success as an editor may be found in his ability to recognize what is news and what is not. This is an editorial accomplishment that may be enriched by study and observation. Let him seek to know what will interest his reader, what his constituents are thinking about and especially what he can print that will set them to talking. To make the paper interesting, to make it talked about, should be his constant anxiety.

The mission of the village sheet is to amuse, to gossip, to reflect community life rather than to educate. The editor lives in close intimacy with his people and if he be wise he will assume the attitude of making their interests his interests. He will make elaborately long accounts of their public meetings, the social gatherings, the ball games, the school contests, the things the people do. His constituents may know of world-wide events from the city papers but they cannot read about themselves anywhere else than in his paper. Thousands of Americans never see their name in print except perchance in the village newspaper and they are grateful, indeed, to see it there.

The village newspaper should not seek to imitate the city sheet. Its editor should devote his energies to the rural needs and the rural activities of his five thousand or ten thousand constituents. Let them get their outside information from the city dailies or the periodical press.

And our provincial editor's acute temptation will be to imitate—to make his sheet like his neighbor's sheet.

He will be tempted to save time and study by stealing the thoughts of others. He wants a leading editorial article. What so easy as to rewrite one from the columns of a distant daily changing not the form of construction or the argument or the conclusion—changing nothing but the wording. This is a common practice of the lazy editor. I hope to be forgiven for so constantly referring to it as a repressive influence, as a serious detriment to the progress of American journalism. It easily becomes a habit. Its practice is alluring for, if it produces a more thoughtful article than the editor is capable of writing, the people praise it thus giving to the editor the most subtle of all flattery, the flattery that is undeserved, the flattery that attributes to a man something he does not possess. The editor enjoys it overmuch.

The village editor usually is deep in local politics. Quite as much as any one else does he help to name the town officers, the county rulers, the man to the legislature, the congressman. Frequently, indeed, he is called to these posts or to the higher honors of the State. He sits on governing boards and he is a delegate to all sorts of conventions. He is big in public affairs.

This kind of newspaper life is entirely different from that of the city. It is a life that may be made exceedingly attractive and that may be enjoyed to the uttermost because of its independence, its great influence, its close intimacy with the people and its opportunities for wholesome service. What the editor

writes is read by everybody, the children as well, and we all know how a child is influenced by what it reads.

Some one has said of the village editor: "He comes pretty near being the boss of the entire town."

CHAPTER IX

THE DAILY NEWSPAPER IN THE SMALL CITY

"I HAD rather be the editor of a daily in a small city than hold any other newspaper post," remarked a journalist who had tried almost every kind of newspaper work—and many will agree with him. Increased facilities for gathering news and information and the wonderful improvement in printing office mechanism permit the making of a complete newspaper almost anywhere. The small cities may have just as good a daily sheet as the big ones if the owners care to pay the price of producing it. The news associations and the telegraph companies deliver news simultaneously in all parts of the country. The newspaper in the remote Northwest or the extreme South gets the same telegraphic news as is furnished to New York City or to New England.

Any editor may supplement his news service with syndicate articles—by which is meant, articles written in New York, Washington, the State Capital, or anywhere, and duplicated to any number of newspapers. Syndicate service has come to be an important feature of American journalism. Its use saves the editor time, trouble, and expense. A few syndicates in New York

and Washington send special news by wire but most of the matter goes by mail. It consists largely of articles on national topics, social topics, business, the theaters, music, art, and sports. At this writing a syndicate is sending from New York a service of excellent editorial articles on general topics. All sorts of feature matter also may be had: the medical column, the cookery department, the fashion show, the question and answer diversion, the short daily or weekly story of fiction, a daily cartoon or a comic strip or cut. Entire pages of matter are offered on every imaginable topic for use in Saturday and Sunday edition supplements. They include even the comic pictorial broadsides in vivid color. Several of the big metropolitan sheets sell their miscellaneous Sunday features entire and some of them furnish a special news service intended to supplement the news associations' report. This news service and Sunday syndicate service sent from the big newspapers furnish the identical articles that appear in the papers from whose offices they are sent. By their use the out of town editor may go a great way toward reproducing the big city sheet. All of this kind of matter is offered at ridiculously low prices, the profit to the producer being, of course, in its repeated duplication.

The modern multiple printing press, the modern stereotyping process and the linotype typesetting machine are in general use all over the country, giving the same mechanical facilities as enjoyed in the larger cities.

By availing himself of all these things the editor in the small city may produce a newspaper of any size and almost any quality to suit his fancy. In all matters of national or state importance or of world-wide interest he may reasonably compete with the big newspapers if he cares to spend the money with which to do so.

The chief concern of the provincial editor however will center in his organization for the collection of home and neighborhood news. This must be of superior quality and in generous volume, for his so-called "local" news is vital to his success.

In New York City there is practically no such thing as local news. Happenings of considerable importance are not printed simply because they happened in New York. They must possess enough of importance in themselves to interest a large number of readers, must be just as interesting to outsiders as to residents of the city. Scores of big societies and organizations give banquets with three hours of oratory and reporters listening to every word, but unless something important or highly interesting is said by the speakers the newspapers print not a word about the event. An ordinary murder, or suicide, or elopement, or a celebration like that of a golden wedding, even though it may have happened in the next block to where he lives does not interest a New Yorker any more than as though it had happened in Boston or Buffalo. He does not know the persons involved. The newspapers make very little of the event unless it has some dramatic features.

In New York City there are between two hundred and fifty and three hundred homicides every year and not one half of them are even mentioned by the press. The details of them are known in every office but little is printed about them because they are not of general interest.

Now, had the big banquet or the murder or the other things happened in a small city the editor must have printed columns of matter about them, for the very good reason that in smaller communities everybody knows everybody else and all are interested in each other. Everybody who attended the banquet must be especially interested in it for people like to read about things in which they themselves participate.

The metropolitan press prints nothing of the ordinary happenings in the scores of cities and villages within fifty or seventy-five miles. The small city newspaper has a correspondent in every town and hamlet near by and everything of any account is recorded. In the country, the newspaper that has the best town and neighborhood news becomes the most popular sheet.

In the big city the editor and his staff know personally a very small proportion of the population; in the small city they know everybody worth knowing. The provincial editor enjoys, if he will, the social life of the place. He hobnobs with the congressman, with the state officers who chance to live near, with all those who have to do with public affairs. He is influential in their selection. He participates in public functions, takes a lively interest in all that is going

on, sits in councils, is a member of the board of education and trustee of the nearby college, and by personal interest and activity makes himself a "leading citizen" of the place.

The journalist in the small city, like the village editor, is in close intimacy with his readers. He is bound to them by the tie of community interest. He lives with them as well as for them. He may make himself the most influential and the most beloved man in the neighborhood if he cares to do so. Repeatedly in the history of this Republic the editor of the small city newspaper has been called to the President's cabinet, to a foreign ambassadorship, to the national congress, to the government of his state and to county and town office.

Loyalty to community interests is perhaps as popular and as profitable an attitude as the provincial editor can take. If the town needs sewers, or if its pavements are poor, or its streets unclean, or its educational system is faulty, or any obvious reform is needed, he easily can effect the change. Some public official is responsible for the defect and nothing so quickly warms an official into life as temperate, convincing criticism of his acts. He cannot withstand public opinion, and he knows that public opinion finds its first reflection in the newspaper.

The editor may influence as none other can toward the erection of public buildings, the establishment of high schools or colleges, the making of parks, and the bringing to town of new enterprises. He may cham-

pion the community needs by addressing legislative bodies, may defend against unjust taxation, may call for state aid or federal assistance. In a thousand ways he may influence to great benefits. There is no denying the fascination, the wholesome satisfaction of well directed influence. There is no limit to the honest pride a man may have because he influences the thoughts and the actions of many men.

CHAPTER X

THE REWARDS OF JOURNALISM—CHIEFLY FOUND IN CONGENIAL EMPLOYMENT—COMMUNITY SERVICE

A BROADER comprehension than that reflected by mere pecuniary results is necessary to a proper estimate of the rewards of journalism. Great pecuniary success has come to a few metropolitan newspaper owners, moderate success to many owners in other cities; but the number of successful owners is very small compared with the thousands, in number, of journalists who are working for salary only—the men who represent the journalism of the day.

It is difficult to compare the rewards of journalism with those of any other business or profession. If we consider the pecuniary rewards the comparison certainly must be unfavorable. Let us see:—

Many successful lawyers have incomes from fifty thousand dollars upward, a year. Many physicians and many surgeons make fifty thousand dollars or more by the practice of their profession. There are oculists and artists who make thirty thousand plus. Our prize operatic singers have soared to two hundred thousand. The presidents of banks, railroad companies, in-

surance companies, steel companies, copper companies —men who have achieved high success in their business —commonly enough have salaries of from fifty thousand to one hundred thousand dollars a year and every opportunity to double the sum if they choose to live up to their privileges. These are the prizes of the calling to the most successful men in it; and in a way they measure the success of the men who have won them.

But there are few prizes in the newspaper business. Nothing like these big salaries is paid to the men who achieve supreme journalistic success. In New York City for instance—and New York is the best newspaper city in the world, pays the biggest salaries, and offers the best journalistic advantages and chances—possibly ten editors have twenty-five thousand dollars a year. One brilliant editor has much more than this sum for the reason that his contract with the owner—made when the sheet's circulation was small—was based on the number of papers to be sold. The circulation increased to phenomenal figures and so did the editor's pay. Of the seven thousand newspaper editors and writers in New York City, a number not exceeding twenty have salaries of more than twenty thousand dollars; yet those who have achieved genuine success in the business—success that is relatively as great as that of the bank presidents and professional men mentioned above—may be numbered by the hundred. Newspaper salaries are very much larger than they were forty years ago, double as much in some departments, yet, despite this, the pecuniary rewards

have no comparison with those of many other professions or businesses.

Since this book's intent is to tell the young man just what journalism offers we may say that in New York City, at this writing (1922) the salaries of editors in chief, for morning and evening newspapers, range from fifteen thousand to thirty-five thousand dollars; those of managing editors from eight thousand to thirty thousand dollars; city editors, four thousand to ten thousand dollars; copy readers, two thousand to four thousand dollars; dramatic and music critics, four thousand to seven thousand five hundred dollars; staff writers on finance and politics, four thousand to eight thousand dollars; reporters, one thousand to seven thousand dollars.

These then are the pecuniary rewards of the business to the men who do not achieve ownership. In other cities they are much smaller; in the small cities not more than half so much.

Prices paid for newspaper work differ materially in different offices. For reasons of policy or poverty some pay much less than others. The higher sums just mentioned go to the few only, for it should remain in mind that there is one editor in chief only, one managing editor, one city editor, one dramatic critic on each sheet, and the daily newspapers under consideration number twelve or fourteen only in the metropolitan district. Three quarters of the newspaper workers on these journals earn less than four thousand dollars each a year. The man who earns five thousand dollars

a year in a New York office is rated as highly successful and desirable, and usually his services are in demand in other offices—for good men in journalism are exceedingly scarce.

To the youngster just entering the business these newspaper salaries may look attractive; indeed one of the magnets of the calling is the fact that from the first the beginner is paid fifteen or twenty dollars a week, or enough to live on. Physicians and lawyers frequently make comparatively nothing for a year or two after they begin. And many newspaper men seem satisfied to work along through life on what they can get. In all offices may be seen the pathetic spectacle of men with silvered locks who have sat at the same desk for more than a third of a century.

Newspaper work is fascinating, yet it is sadly ephemeral. In the big city the life of the newspaper is six hours; in the small city less than twenty-four. The morning newspaper lasts until toward noon; the evening sheet ceases to thrill at bed time. Dawn brings a new edition and yesterday's is forgotten forever. The bright sayings of the editor amuse and interest for the moment but they do not live. They are not of a nature to make a lasting impression or reward.

Greeley is remembered as a vigorous abolitionist and temperance advocate and a virile writer on national topics, but to-day his writings are unsought save by a few students of journalism and a few historians of Civil War times. That William Cullen Bryant was a great editor is almost forgotten; but his fame as a

poet lasts. Samuel Bowles and Murat Halsted and Joseph Medill and other great editors of the Civil War period had nation-wide reputations as upholders of Lincoln and as champions of the Union cause. They are absolutely unread to-day. Dana, whose splendid scholarship, whose familiarity with all literature, whose marvelous memory and whose stupendous reservoir of information must have insured him lasting fame had he devoted himself to the making of books, was so fascinated and so incessantly busy with the making of newspapers that he attempted little that might interest future generations. He must have attained the heights of literary reputation had he undertaken authorship. Eugene Field toiled in routine newspaper work for twenty years; his fame rests in his verses. Nobody remembers John Hay as a hard-working journalist, yet he was one, and a good one, too. He will not be forgotten as a statesman and a poet. Walt Whitman's many years of editorship seldom are recalled: his poetry lives. Who knows that Edgar Allen Poe was an editor from 1835 to 1847; who does not know "The Raven?" Noah Webster was one of the founders and editors of *American Minerva* in 1793. John G. Whittier was an editor until he abandoned journalism for authorship. Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote for periodicals from 1857 until 1891. Thomas Jefferson founded the *National Gazette* in 1791. James Anthony Froude was a newspaper writer. William D. Howells began his career as an editor. These men must have done fine newspaper work, but little record of it remains.

In France, just at the close of the World War, nearly all the members of the government had been writers for the newspapers. They will be remembered as statesmen, not as editors. Of them Mr. Stéphane Lauzanne, the editor of *le Matin*, says:

Mr. Raymond Poincaré, the President, formerly wrote articles that were remarkable for their clearness, lucidity, and argumentation on the greatest economical and political problems that ever agitated France. Mr. Georges Clémenceau, Premier, has always been looked upon as the first newspaper man in France, the pride of the French press, for as a matter of fact, he has been the guiding spirit and active head of several important newspapers, creating them, making them up, editing them and inspiring them—in a word, setting his mark upon them. Mr. Stephen Pichon, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, is also a newspaper man. For a long time he was on the staff of *Justice* and afterward publisher of *le Petit Journal*. Other members of the French Cabinet, Mr. Lafferre, Secretary of Public Education; Mr. Klotz, Secretary of Finance; Mr. Georges Leygues, Secretary of the Navy; have also written in the great dailies of Paris and Mr. J. M. Dumesnil, Under-Secretary of State for Aviation, was at the beginning of his career a brilliant and active reporter.

No, newspaper articles, sparkling and spectacular as many of them are, must be recognized as ephemeral. The editor has no time for leisurely work. He rarely studies a single subject long enough or intensely enough to become profoundly authoritative on that subject. He goes on through life informing, elucidating, explaining, protesting, analyzing, until overtaken by the infirmities of years he passes from view. In a hazy sort of a way it is said of him that he was a great editor,

but all that he wrote for his newspaper is forgotten. He leaves little for future generations to ponder over.

Alas! It is a sickening, saddening thought that the newspaper is for the moment only and that the editor who leaves behind him a lasting record of greatness has gained it through some other line of endeavor.

To the ambitious man the average newspaper salary means little. Any possible savings from it must be insufficient to make him especially prosperous. They do not insure against a pinch in old age or against misfortune. They do not permit of the accumulation of much property or capital. They furnish a feeble inspiration to the ambition that seeks the comfort of leisurely life, the stimulation of extended travel, or the luxury of intellectual repose and freedom from physical exertion that every one hopes may bless his declining years.

And if these conditions be true of metropolitan workers, how much the more must they befit the writers for newspapers in the smaller cities and villages. It is not the ideal of the American boy either in country or city to live forever in a rented house or on a small salary, or, indeed, to live the simple life. The small-city journalism offers little else than these if the young man cannot become a newspaper owner. To the man who owns his sheet the rewards are more abundant. But ownership involves the possession of capital and usually the young man just through with student life has no capital except his brains. In other callings the capital of brains commands success, notably in

the law, in medicine, in engineering, in architecture, but in the newspaper business, while brains are absolutely essential they advance the young man only so far, give but feeble reward, unless reinforced with capital with which to buy a newspaper property. It surely is a discouraging feature of the calling that, however intellectual or learned a man may be, he rarely achieves more than moderate pecuniary success, as long as he remains an employee.

In the big cities the big properties have a money valuation measured by millions of dollars. They are owned generally by very rich men or families and ownership rarely changes. To possess one of them has been the ardent and unaccomplished ambition of thousands of men: capitalists, statesmen, reformers, philanthropists, cranks. The chance of the young journalist getting one is infinitesimal. And in the small city the price put on a newspaper that by chance happens to be for sale is far beyond its earning value. There seems to be some mysterious ingredient in newspaper properties that gives them a fictitious value in the mind of the owner. Whether it is prospective influence, or prospective prospects, or what, nobody is able to explain; but the sheet is always "worth much more than it is earning."

It is a curious fact that, whereas a factory, or a store, or a farm, or a railroad that has not made a cent for five or six years, will sell for no more than its old junk represents, nevertheless a newspaper with the same poverty of profits commands a price based on

a prodigality of profits. The very great success of some newspapers seems to have inspired the belief that any sheet may be made profitable if properly managed; but it should not be forgotten that business ability counts for quite as much as editorial excellence on the newspaper balance sheet. Indeed, it may count for more, for have we not seen excellently edited sheets fail utterly, and do we not know of others, utterly devoid of editorial worth, in which the joy bells of prosperity tinkle a cheerful chime?

Since then the savings from the salary of even the successful newspaper writer are insufficient for the accumulation of property or the establishment of any considerable prosperity, and since newspaper ownership involves the investment of capital and smart business ability as well, it follows that our young man must look beyond mere pecuniary gains for the rewards of journalism.

What then are some of the rewards? The editor may exercise his gifts of persuasion in unnumbered directions. The important activities of the world pass by him in daily review. His mental vision may survey the entire field of human thought, furnishing delightful subjects for consideration, for study, for exposition. In all modesty and without vainglory he may rejoice in the satisfaction of well directed influence; may find pleasure in the responsibility of influencing public opinion; may take pride in the endeavor to aid in the intellectual and moral uplift of his fellow-men. What greater reward hath man than this?

There are no problems of statecraft, science, society or religion, that he may not undertake. Everybody likes to tell his neighbor the latest news and gossip and especially likes to add what he thinks about them. The newspaper editor tells his information to thousands; and he finds additional satisfaction in telling it well. To take a hand in every political shindy is uproariously good fun; indeed, notwithstanding all its importance, its responsibilities, its dignities, there is more fun in the newspaper business than in any other occupation known to man.

Neither are the joys and the advantages of a newspaper connection confined to the editorial desk alone. In consequence of his abundant fund of information on current events and his knowledge of the ways of the world the editor is asked to participate in all sorts of public events. This is particularly the privilege of the editor in the small city where he is well known and where everybody seeks his good opinion and good will. There he is found in meetings and councils and all social gatherings of any account, taking active part in the speaking and the disposing. There, too, he is active in party politics, in community interests and in the town's public life. In the big cities he is less in public gaze, yet, if he has reached editorial success, he finds himself welcome wherever people gather. If perchance he can speak pleasingly he is asked for addresses to all sorts of audiences and for after-dinner speeches at public banquets. His long experience in mingling with public men gives him ease of manner in social gather-

ings. Constant practice in writing usually gives him the gift of ready speech.

The editor is asked to consult with citizens' committees, to sit with advisory boards, to take membership in all sorts of organizations and clubs. He has every opportunity to participate actively in the social, the political, and the intellectual life of his parish. And the wise editor does all those things, appreciating that it is to his business advantage to mingle with the people, to know what they are talking about, what interests them, and what may be their opinions.

Nor can it be denied that the editor of importance finds supreme satisfaction in the acquaintances he makes. No other occupation offers such opportunity for meeting public men, for intimacy with those who are influencing the intellectual and the commercial world. His very environment brings him in contact with them. He has the instruction of their wisdom and their opinion and they are interested in him because of his familiarity with current events; and very often the choicest of comradeship results. He knows his fellow editors. He knows the successful authors, the essayists, the critics, the makers of literature and the lovers of literature, the men conspicuous in education, the leaders in the social world. He may, if he will, find himself in constant association with the brightest minds and the most intellectual people of the period—and who shall say that this is not greatly to be desired?

Yet more naturally, however, comes association with

men in the public service, with the leaders of political parties and of political movements. If the editor's journal chances to be in accord with one of the great political parties the editor finds himself in the confidence of the party leaders and participating in their councils. His advice is sought as to party plans and measures, the availability of proposed candidates, the conduct of campaigns and the operation of the party machinery. Successful editorship involves a fine knowledge of party politics, a constant study of national issues and of statesmanship and of the requirements of public service, as well as searching inquiry into the science of government and the intricacies of diplomacy. The journalist's training especially fits him for political activity and very frequently, after a few years of editing, he joins in public service or engages in professional politics.

Indeed, very many newspaper writers drift into businesses that promise better pecuniary rewards. They start in journalism because it pays something from the first, but careful calculation discloses little promise for wealth in the future and they seek the golden dollar elsewhere.

It is not to be urged that journalism especially fits a man for commercial life, nevertheless there is a mysterious influence in it that makes a man out of a boy very quickly. A few years of reporting in a big city makes him mentally alert, if anything can, and teaches the ways of the world as nothing else does. He experiences a new phase of life every day of his

life. He is taught to search for facts, to seek for causes and to foresee results. He gets broadness of vision, expanse of comprehension, and rugged contact with the world—contact with the men whose efforts are important enough to command publicity. The nature of news reporting is not generally understood. Routine reporting is comparatively easy. The reporting of highly important events is extremely difficult. In political convulsions, in financial panics, in commercial failures, in big criminal cases, in social scandals, in crooked legislation, in most of the topics that excite mankind, the people most involved strive to conceal the real facts. How is the reporter to know whether he is being lied to or not? Ah! but he must know. It is his business to know.

It is the commonest of reportorial experience to have the information given by one man positively contradicted by another. All decent newspapers insist on accurate news reports. They cannot afford to be untruthful. It is of the utmost importance to them that the narrative of a great piece of news, to be read by a million persons, be written with absolute fidelity to fact. It may be said in all truth that the experienced reporter starts out for the facts of a big case with the expectation that half of the people involved will try to mislead and fool him. He questions every statement made to him and the motive of the man who makes it. He verifies it through some other medium. He becomes a detective. He uses every trick of the calling to extract unwilling information.

This search for truth is one phase only of the many that constitute a reporter's experience. They involve the absorption of a mass of information, an intimate contact with men of affairs, the cultivation of ability to think quickly and speak easily, and mingle pleasantly with the world. It has been urged with some reason that five or six years of this sort of thing better fits a young man for almost any kind of business than does sitting at a clerk's desk learning the rudiments of the business.

But the intelligent or educated young man with a grain of perception in his makeup should understand that the joy of living is found in congenial employment—in work that inspires and educates and delights. There would not be much happiness in this world if happiness depended on riches. The good physician finds greater satisfaction in the helpfulness of his service than in the collection of his fee. The money value of Mr. Edison's discovery is probably the very last thing he thinks of.

The Rev. Washington Gladden, who gave his life to the ministry, was first an apprentice in the Owego *Gazette* and he never thereafter could withstand the fascinations of newspaper writing. While conducting his parishes he contributed to various publications. He conducted a magazine of his own while in Springfield, Mass., of which he says: "I edited it in connection with my parish work, doing all the editorial writing, ten pages of minion every month, conducting all the correspondence, reading all the proof, and making up the

pages in the composing room. That was really worth while. I never had a better time." "To generate and diffuse a sound, sweet, generous, wholesome public opinion is the best and the biggest business in which any human being can engage" was one of his maxims.

There is no denying the fascination of power and of influence, the satisfaction of persuasion and of direction. The editor comes to love his work because he feels that he is participating in leadership. He appreciates, perhaps, that he is the custodian of something new and he glories in the thought that he may communicate this new thing to the world; rejoices that he is influencing others to see as he sees, to think as he thinks, to understand as he understands.

He comes to understand the delights and the responsibilities of persuasion, appreciating, as Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch tells the Cambridge students, that persuasion is the aim of all the arts, of all exposition of the sciences, of all useful exchange of converse in our daily life; as it is the end sought by the artist in his picture, the mathematician in his problem, the clergyman in his sermon. "Nor can I imagine any earthly gift more covetable by you, Gentlemen," says this lecturer, "than of persuading your fellows to listen to your views and attend to what you have at heart. Suppose that you wish to become a journalist. Well, and why not? Is it a small thing to desire the power of influencing day by day to better citizenship an unguessed number of men, using the best thought and applying the best language at your command?"

CHAPTER XI

NEWSPAPER INFLUENCE—WAYS OF PERSUADING THE PUBLIC—SERVICE TO THE GOVERNMENT

THE editor of experience appreciates that in attempting to influence the public he is addressing many men of many minds. An argument intended to convince a scholar or a well informed man would be lost on an ignorant man, while an appeal written down to the understanding of the ignorant man must provoke mirth from the wise. Nevertheless, all persons frequently are influenced by mere suggestion, especially when they have not studied the subject. Frequently they may reverse a judgment on a mere hint in a newspaper. Not all men have time, in these busy days, to think out the problems of the hour, have not the facilities at hand for research, haven't been taught to think. Intelligent thinking is a result of education—the education that teaches to think. Mental improvement is the result of thought. Progress comes from mental application. What we call "experience" is the result of constant thought in one direction or toward a single purpose. Lincoln was fourfold the man in 1865 that he was in 1860. Any observer could see Woodrow Wil-

son leap forward in mental strength from the instant of his appearance in public life.

The editor literally thinks for his readers. He acquires a habit of thought not cultivated or sought or possessed by his readers. He is trained to a mental analysis of the causes of great events, to an expert understanding of their present importance, to a clear insight into their future influence. If he has studied, he knows the great influences that for centuries have governed human conduct.

In the big cities the editor knows the quality of mind he is addressing better than does the writer in smaller communities. In New York, for instance, every sheet has a different sort of clientele. Everybody knows which newspaper, by reason of its scholarly editorial articles, its criticisms, its reviews and non-sensational news appeals to the highest intelligence. And every one knows the ones that appeal to the non-thinking public.

But in smaller towns the newspaper goes to the wise and the unwise alike. The task of pleasing everybody requires study, and here editorial writing becomes an art, indeed. The scholar may sneer at the article that pleases the man of toil and both may despise the suggestion that convinces the man of medium intelligence.

The editor of scholarly instincts naturally wants to please the highest intelligence among his readers; but the readers who really think in a scholarly way are few. The great proportion of readers care little for so-called

polite literature, neither do they care for profound instruction. They want the simpler sort of editorial comment and are better pleased with that which explains than with that which argues. They want their news adorned with breath-catching headlines in big type.

In the large cities many professional and business men read several daily newspapers, but their number is small compared with the millions who read one paper only. In smaller cities and in the villages and on the farms it is quite the exception when more than one daily newspaper enters the household. In very many instances this one sheet is all the reading matter the members of the household have. Their entire conception of public affairs is had from this publication. It is quite impossible to suppose that they are not influenced by it. They let the editor think for them and they accept his conclusions.

It has been argued, with much reason, that the newspaper is indispensable to a republican or representative form of government embracing vast territory, like our own. Even the founders of this nation did not anticipate that the government could extend its jurisdiction far beyond the Alleghenies, much less to the Pacific coast. The plea for states rights was founded on the belief that it must be impossible to bring so large an area as the original thirteen states under a single form of government. Without the telegraph, without railroads, in the early history of the American nation there was no way of keeping the mass of the people

in close touch with the government, of supplying quick information on current events without which the people are incapable of forming correct opinions. To-day, the newspapers, with their simultaneous publication all over the continent, their fast printing and quick delivery, keep all the people instantly informed. They are able immediately to reflect public opinion, thus making themselves indispensable to the government. Vast though our distances may be, we have the healthiest kind of public spirit and response. The sentiment of the nation is at the government's disposal in a jiffy.

This was strikingly illustrated after one of President Wilson's intimations to Germany that unconditional surrender must be a condition of armistice. The same edition of a New York newspaper that contained the President's declaration also contained comments on that declaration made by more than two hundred different publications from Maine to California, and every one of them insisted on "unconditional surrender." The President knew instantly that the people were with him.

For very many years it has been the practice of governments (and yet more persistently the practice of political leaders) to put out "feelers" through the press. A new policy, a questionable nomination, a new plan of taxation, may be contemplated. The government seeks to "feel the pulse of the people" on its desirability. Hints are given to the correspondents that the policy or the plan has been suggested and is under consideration and the correspondents pass it

along to their newspapers, well fortified with those stale old prefixes, "it is said that" or "rumor has it that" or "a person high in authority who does not wish to be quoted hints that"—and so on—giving an outline of the proposed action.

This is followed by another "feeler" passing out a little more information saddled on some other mysterious persons. On any important question the public flashes a quick response. The proposal in Washington, for instance, to double the tax on theater tickets and admissions to places of amusement drew a howl of disapproval that defeated the plan. The people didn't want their pleasures taxed additionally.

The government or the political party that deliberately defies public sentiment as expressed in the newspapers is put out of business usually at the following election.

Throughout the World War the newspapers were of the utmost usefulness to the government. They stood between the government and the people. They made and reflected public sentiment as never before. Government announcements were read in every city in the nation and in most of the villages within six hours of their release. The government spoke to the people in almost instantaneous speech.

The newspapers urged and sustained and stimulated the bond sales, the thrift stamp drives, the activities of the Young Men's Christian Association, and like organizations, the merciful ministrations of the Red Cross, the vast collection of money for the relief of

stricken peoples, the food campaigns, the conservation of heat and light and a host of other material things. It would require pages of print to tell the half of it. It would require hours of constant thought to appreciate it, Recall, if you will, what your own favorite paper did, and then be assured that thousands of other daily sheets did the same thing!

Newspaper influence had perhaps its finest recognition in the various propaganda of the war. All governments used the press lavishly with intent to guide, to conceal, to accomplish. They "felt the pulse of the people" constantly and subtly. Proposed policies were tested out. Often they were suggested to direct attention from the real policy or to take the sting from it.

The French press under the immediate inspiration and control of the government held the people in compact unity. It stimulated the morale and intensified the purpose of the soldiers, for it was possible to strew the trenches with newspapers within two hours after they were printed. This was of inestimable patriotic service. Not any other government used the newspapers with such skill or with greater beneficial results.

Newspaper influence was sought in the process of the censorship. The object of censorship was not alone to prevent information from reaching the enemy but also to influence public opinion. All warring nations seek the good opinion of the neutrals—seek to have neutral nations convinced of the ultimate success of their armies—hence the impulse to suppress the news

of defeat and to exalt victory. Early in the war this was the pronounced attitude of Germany and Great Britain toward America, much to the annoyance of the American newspapers.

Germany's efforts to influence the American public through our newspapers were so constant, so vociferous, so transparent, that everybody recognized the purpose. Yet she continued to spend great sums of money on propaganda to the very end of the war. Germany worked the press of every country. It was a part of her war plan just as much as was the making of bullets or asphyxiating gas. It was thought out and arranged for and practiced before the war broke. It was depended on to create sympathy and to establish justification; and it was exceedingly efficacious in the early periods and influenced greatly to postpone our entrance into the conflict.

Despite the censorship the war was very well reported by American newspapers. Our journals were read with an interest approaching to anxiety, and the public came to believe that the news was truthfully presented. News reading was raised to a high plane of importance. The war gave the public greater confidence in the newspapers.

In olden times, despotic times, in Greece and Italy let us say, before newspapers existed, the people gathered in public places to listen to government proclamations and whatever news the rulers were pleased to give out. The information was proclaimed by heralds or was placarded on market walls. The usual policy was to

keep the people in ignorance of what was going on. No public opinion existed, for the public had no information on which to form conclusions. Many governments prevented gatherings of the people knowing the power of the people to create sentiment and rebellion. Not for weeks or months did remote regions get important news that the government wished to conceal. No means of quick communication existed. The concealment of news and the suppression of public sentiment helped to strengthen despotic government. The rulers might circulate false news as well as the truth, and frequently did so. Our present-day censorship is an hereditary relic of this ancient-day concealment.

The newspaper's greatest influence is not in persuading persons who have learned to think for themselves. It is exercised on that great mass of our population that has no other source of information than the newspapers. In thousands of families not more than two or three books are purchased in an entire year, and these are likely to be books of fiction. Yet few families are without a daily newspaper. Usually one paper only is taken, and how could it happen otherwise than that the household should come to the editor's way of thinking when no other thought than his comes to their attention? This condition applies to people in moderate circumstances, employees, helpers, those who live by physical toil or who do the simplest kind of clerical work. These people are easily influenced because they have not been trained to think or analyze

for themselves. They depend on the newspaper for information, explanation, suggestion. They have little inclination or time to study with diligence the great questions of the day and have few or no facilities for doing so in any event. They are not interested in profound argument but they accept conclusions readily. If the editor be wise he will seek to know what proportion of his readers are of this type.

The average newspaper reader does not think overmuch of what he is reading but he is highly receptive. His conclusion is likely to be affirmative. It is his nature to believe rather than to distrust. He is easily led by artful groupings of fact, rather more easily led thus than by argument requiring much thought. There is not time in these strenuous days for the old-fashioned kind of thinking. Quick conclusions are the vogue and they are not the result of profound thought. Rather are they the result of hasty thought. This is attested by the rush from one party to another by the so-called independent voter, or the sudden dethronement of a public idol, or the restoration of a discarded hero to public popularity.

These quick changes in public sentiment have enlivened the history of all times. The poet Byron, in the beginning of his literary career, was praised by men and petted by women until the entire British nation was chanting adorations. Then, with the suddenness of a whirlwind, it turned against him and with furious persecution drove him into exile. The American hero of Manila Bay was escorted up Broadway by shouting

thousands of admirers. Within a year he was no longer a hero. We resisted woman suffrage for scores of years and suddenly accepted it. This nation drank rum from its earliest beginnings and then with comparative suddenness changed the practice of centuries by declaring for prohibition.

The newspaper's unconscious influence over the casual reader must be recognized. It is an instructive influence, usually, of wide scope, covering a multitude of topics that do not come to the reader's attention in any other way than through the newspapers. Information does not get into the magazines or books until weeks or months after the event but the newspapers print it on the instant. The casual newspaper reader, for instance, reads that the new Roentgen ray has been discovered, by means of which the interior of an ordinarily opaque substance may be disclosed in photograph. He reads enough to establish that fact, but as soon as the description begins to become technical the casual reader abandons the article. Nevertheless he has absorbed the fact and a crude notion of the discovery and has added just so much to his fund of information. He may study it out if he chooses.

Again, there is no other quick source of information on new developments in politics, in finance, in the fluctuations of the commercial market prices.

Almost all of us feel that we must know about the artists, the singers, the actors, and we love to talk about them, yet what we say we almost surely have read in some newspaper. You get an intelligent idea at your

breakfast table of the new opera that did not end until midnight, of the new play produced on the night preceding, of the speeches and the spirit of the banquet that did not end until after you were in sleep, of the conflagration that destroyed some well-known building during the night, of the railroad accident that destroyed scores of lives. And these are the things that you talk about during the day. They unconsciously influence your thoughts and your actions even when read casually.

The busy man is rather easily led along or into the editor's way of thinking especially when the topic is new to him. He is not a trained or analytical thinker at best, hasn't time to reflect much on the subject, cannot invent a new line of thought in opposition to the editor's because of unfamiliarity with the subject, has no quick way of getting additional information. Maybe he instinctively balks at the editorial conclusion, but probably the editor is right, he reasons, and he passes to something more interesting.

The next article may be a continuation of comment on a subject written about two days before. It becomes a bit more familiar. He half recognizes the argument. He half accepts it now as his own, has "thought of that before," so he approves. Reiteration has influenced him; a third presentation clinches him. Reiteration is a most subtle means of influencing public opinion. The man who reads the same thought a few times in different diction comes to accept it as his own thought. It is an unconscious influence.

It is little consolation to the editor that his articles are hastily read; so much the more reason, on the contrary, for making them striking and for making their meaning the more easily understood.

People like to see their own beliefs reflected in their newspaper; regard the editorial utterance as a confirmation of it; welcome a new argument in its favor; like to read it to a neighbor; come to look on the sheet as a personal champion.

All newspapers have great influence one way or another. They reach the people to an extent not reached by any other influence, for everybody of any account reads them. Consider for a moment. Rarely does a clergyman find himself addressing a congregation of more than five hundred persons; rarely, indeed, does the public lecturer speak to a thousand persons; and seldom, in the heat of a campaign, does the political orator find five thousand persons within the reach of his voice. Yet a little editorial paragraph, placed conspicuously on the editorial page of the New York *Times*, will be read by more than six hundred thousand persons. A million and a half newspapers are printed in New York city every morning, and nearly two millions every afternoon, not counting those printed in other languages than the English language of which there are nearly a million more. About the same proportion of newspapers to population prevails throughout the chief cities of the United States.

"I never read the editorials" we all have heard many a newspaper reader say. "I simply scan the editorials,"

we hear others remark. Almost all editorial articles are hastily read, and so is the entire sheet for that matter. You have only to watch the process to be convinced. The busy man opens his newspaper to the editorial page as he would open a book, holds it open and high, one page grasped by the left hand and the other by the right. He scans the leading article, reads the first two or three sentences and if attention is not instantly attracted flashes his eye down to the beginning of the next paragraph, and so on. The greater the number of paragraphs in the article the more quick attention it gets. The sensational sheet editors know this and they make many paragraphs in every article.

The profound heavy articles with three or four paragraphs only to the column get scant attention except from readers especially interested in the topic. They are looked at for an instant only. In that instant the reader decides whether he is interested in the topic. Usually he is not. His eye skims along to the next article with same result. Then he may encounter something that he wants to know more about. But it is half a column long. "I'll read it when I get time," he says to himself, as his eye jumps over to the opposite page—a news page—and he begins to absorb the headlines. These he treats in the same hasty manner and in about three minutes he has finished the two pages and has turned over to the next two.

He reads all in the same way. He may pause over a particular article but usually the reading is of short duration. He has absorbed perhaps the spirit of the

headings and maybe the few lines of introduction to the articles that have had his attention. He is ready with an opinion, but that opinion is the opinion of the man who wrote the caption or the introduction. The hasty reader has given the subject not the slightest original thought. Nevertheless he is influenced by it. It is recognized that almost everything we read has its direct or its unconscious influence.

Very many busy men confine their morning newspaper reading to the breakfast table, others "get through" their newspaper while on their way to business. Very little newspaper reading has their attention after reaching the office. Evening newspapers are read more thoroughly. There is more time after dinner. The comfortable chair, the shaded lamp, the family near to join in the comment—all help to make the reading more enjoyable. But even then the average reader does not read with intent attention.

It is incontestably true that the great mass of the people who read the newspapers in this hasty glancing fashion do not think deeply. This mental attitude has had the attention of observers for many years. Hawthorne speaks of "the wild babble of the town—indicating a low tone of feeling and shallow thought." Macaulay said of Tillotson: "His reasoning was just sufficiently profound and sufficiently refined to be followed by a popular audience with that slight degree of intellectual exertion which is a pleasure." Lafcadio Hearn speaks of the masses as people of uncultured taste to whom the higher zones of emotion are out of

reach. Dr. Samuel Johnson remarked: "The greatest part of mankind have no other reason for their opinions than that they are in fashion." And one of the conspicuous British essayists commented: "It serves to show in what a slovenly way most people are content to think."

Henry Ward Beecher ever was impressed with the influence of newspapers. He said:

> Do you ever stop to think that millions have no literature, no school and almost no pulpit but the press? Not one man in ten reads books, but every one of us, except the very helpless poor, satiates himself every day with the newspaper. It is the parent, school, college, theatre, pulpit, example, counsellor, all in one. Every drop in our blood is colored by it.

Some one has said of newspaper influence: "Let me write the headlines and you may write the rest," which was another way of saying: "Let me handle the news and you may write the editorial articles, the criticisms and the other things, and I will have the greater influence." It always has been a debatable question.

Northcliffe, the conspicuous figure in journalism during the great war, has said:

> It is true that an intelligently conducted newspaper can inform and guide public opinion but this is done more through publishing the news than by the dictum of the editorial. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" must be the underlying principle of journalism in a democracy.

In an appeal to editors to help spread the war spirit, a writer in the Columbia University War Papers wrote:

Editorials, repeated editorials, are both desirable and necessary. But to one reader who is influenced by a given editorial many hundreds are influenced day by day by the headlines of the paper and by the wording and form of presentation of the news. It is therefore to a considered and continuous policy of news presentation that we must look primarily for help.

Of newspaper influence Arthur Brisbane has said:

There never was a corrupt official who could hear without dread the growling of a hundred thousand human voices outside his door. There does not live a corrupt official, however hardened, who hears without alarm the opinions of a million men voiced through a newspaper which they trust.

Thackeray's famous paragraph with reference to newspaper activities is often quoted as illustrating the power of the press through her writers. Pendennis and Warrington are passing a brilliantly lighted newspaper building. Reporters were coming out or were dashing up in cabs, and Warrington says:

Look at that, Pen. There she is—the great engine, she never sleeps. She has ambassadors in every quarter of the world—her couriers upon every road. Her officers march along with armies and her envoys walk into statesmen's cabinets. They are ubiquitous. Yonder journal has an agent at this minute giving bribes in Madrid; and another inspecting the price of potatoes at Covent Garden. Look, here comes the foreign express galloping in. They will be able to give news to Downing street tomorrow; funds will rise or fall, fortunes be made or lost; Lord B will get up, and holding the paper in his hand and seeing the noble Marquis in his place, will make a great speech; and Mr.

Doolan will be called away from his supper at the back kitchen; for he is sub-editor and sees the mail on the newspaper sheet before he goes to his own.

It may be said of present-day news column influence that never have the news columns been so free from personal feeling, so fair to foe. The public has never had greater confidence in them. Almost all editors are honest in desire to print both sides of an important controversy. They have come to know it is best policy. The speeches of rival partisans, their communications, their activities, have well-nigh as conspicuous places in the sheet as do the utterances of their own champions. This helps to aid unbiased conclusion.

Public questions never have had such elaborate publicity as in recent years, never have been so intelligently understood; and public sentiment has not hitherto been so active or so influential.

Indeed, the spirit of independent fairness has become so acute that not infrequently the small minority gets a prominence that it does not deserve, with resulting danger that its activities may be mistaken for genuine public sentiment.

This spirit of fairness does not exist of course in all publications, but almost all newspapers are honest in their news columns. The sheets that deliberately falsify become fewer every year. The influence of the news columns has increased vastly.

For individual power and influence Lord Northcliffe stood supreme among editors. His personal triumphs during the war were decisive and far reaching. He de-

stroyed one British cabinet and built another. He forced the reorganization of departments. He compelled changes of military policy and action and he flabbergasted pretty nearly everybody who opposed. One of his distinguished opponents lamented that Northcliffe was the most powerful man in England's affairs since Cromwell.

His editorial voice reached all kinds of people through the score or more of daily, weekly, and monthly publications owned or controlled by him all over the British empire. He owned the *Times* that for more than one hundred years had endeared itself to the British well-to-do and upper classes for its trustworthy news reports, its superior editorial comment and its fearless political criticism. He owned the *Evening Mail* that scattered a million copies daily among the common people. He talked every day to millions of people, who, while not thinking profoundly were willing to be led by intellectual excellence.

Northcliffe's methods were of entrancing interest to those who observe and study newspaper influence. He admits that in the beginning he was fascinated by the American sensational press, by its ways of doing things, by the enormous circulations of some of our editions. Nothing of the sort existed in England twenty years ago and Northcliffe was the first to introduce American methods there. He visited us more than once to study our lurid journalism. He took several American newspaper men to help him in London. He was impressed with Mr. Pulitzer's thought that our

newspapers were too high toned, were written over the heads of the masses; that the masses were ignorant of what was going on because they could not understand the newspapers, and that a sheet written in simple language and sold for a cent must be popular. He would bring his sheet down to the comprehension of any man who could read.

Northcliffe added acute sensationalism to this general plan, and his daily newspapers in London, Manchester, Leeds, Glasgow, and elsewhere jumped to big circulations. He did not much disturb the conservative news policy of the *Times*, but its editorial page became livid. Of him it was said:

> Sensationalism is his gospel. Every day must have its thrill; every paragraph must be an electric shock. Politics are nothing; parties are nothing; principles are nothing; all that matters is that the great public shall be kept humming with excitement. He believes that power and political influence are in the hands of the multitude and that the newspaper having the ear of the multitude will control the tides of national thought.

Northcliffe's unprecedented attacks on the Asquith government made the world gasp. Friends of the cabinet and some newspapers urged the suspension of his publications and his arrest for treason. His attacks continued. The government did not notice them. His unlicensed freedom of opinion was permitted. The idiocy of the Gallipoli campaign was exposed. The punishment of its authors was demanded. The inefficiency of the munitions department was made a public

scandal and reorganization was compelled. Northcliffe insisted on a small war cabinet and on many other changes. Asquith's indecision and exasperating deliberation, at the moment when quick thought and quick deeds were vital, filled Northcliffe with rage. The Asquith ministry fell and Northcliffe named the succession. The world has rarely seen such an exhibition of newspaper power.

The editor's enemies endeavored to minimize the incident. They contended that Asquith's fall was inevitable after the failure of the British advance on the Somme and the disaster in Roumania; that it was another instance of Northcliffe's newspaper smartness in anticipating a coming event, urging its enactment and then taking credit for compelling it.

This, I am sorry to say, is a venerable editorial device for making newspaper reputation—learn what is contemplated by the government or some one else and then start in the newspaper a raging demand for it and when the end is accomplished take all the credit for it. Northcliffe was an adept at this sort of thing. Indeed his enemies accused him of giving the impression of forcing the government against its will. Be that as it may, he was easily the commanding figure in the journalism of the world during the war.

CHAPTER XII

THE STUDY OF A SPECIALTY—GREAT ADVANTAGE FOLLOWS THE MASTERY OF TWO OR THREE SUBJECTS

Now, if our ambitious young newspaper man intends to be the editor of a sheet in a small city or a village, he should study every part of the business in detail. But, if he means to remain on a big city staff it will be to his advantage, after he has done general work for two or three years, to decide what particular branch of the work he prefers to follow and then bend effort toward that end. If he fancies the writing of editorial articles, let him study the art of editorial writing. If he aspires to executive work, such as is done by managing and city editors, let him prepare accordingly. But, if he desires to continue on the general writing staff he will find it very much to his advantage—in connection with his general work—to study a specialty or two. In the newspaper office the man who knows most about a given topic is the man summoned to write on that topic. The expert on national politics is sent to the national political conventions and the man who knows most about finance must write the big stories of financial moment—just as in football the best kicker is called on to kick the goal.

Now, of newspaper specialties there is no end. Let yours be one in which you will be interested, to master which will be a delight. One young man of my acquaintance became fascinated with astronomy and he studied it between times while working at his newspaper desk, mastered it, became an authority on the subject, and was soon in demand as a writer of astronomical articles and astronomical books.

Another young man became interested in geography and exploration until he obtained intimate knowledge of the land and the seas that decorate this fascinating old earth. His articles were soon in demand at altitudinous rates. He hobnobs with explorers, directs in geographical societies, superintends in the making of maps, delivers lectures and writes constantly—and still the wonder grows that he can get so much out of it.

Men who can write with authority on the subject of music are especially welcome in newspaper offices, and a writer who knows engineering and construction has a splendid specialty in these days of machinery, enormous buildings and marvelous public works.

But, conspicuously above all other newspaper specialties let me put politics, and next to politics in my opinion comes finance. In a whimsical sense they may be said to go together, for do we not see occasionally that politics has to be financed and that finance is at the mercy of politics. Each in itself is highly important and together they rule the world. Of politics there is no end—never has been—never will be. Year

in and year out its discussion fills more than one-half of the editorial page. For centuries it has commanded the supreme mental attention of statesmen and writers. It always furnishes the great public issue, and here in America we all take part in it through our right to vote and through our knowledge of the parties and the issues and the men who represent them as set forth in the newspapers which we all read. We might easily carry this suggestion to indefinite lengths, proving by argument and by facts that a supreme knowledge of this subject must be of greater usefulness to the newspaper writer than any other specialty; and it may be added, in all truth, that no man can become a really great editor without an intimate knowledge of politics.

Only a little less important to newspaper men as a special study is the subject of finance. That melange of mystery called Wall Street we have always with us. Its doings are deep and mysterious to the uninstructed, but plain as a pancake to him who has studied them. The finances of the nation always have had public attention. John Fiske, in his admirable work called "The Critical Period of the American Republic," has shown how for eight or ten years after the Revolutionary War the young nation was on the verge of destruction through inability to finance its poverty. Since then we have had a dozen financial convulsions called panics, each one followed by business depression and endless newspaper discussions of causes and possible effects. Alway they must continue.

This particular study includes an enormous range

of topics, including the banking business and banking systems public and private at home and abroad, international monetary systems, foreign exchange, gold exports and imports, tariff imposition, currency systems, commercial credits, problems of transportation, the financing of great undertakings through the issue of stocks and bonds, the buying and selling of our enormous agricultural product as well as the product of our factories—and many other kindred topics which contribute to the live news of the day and afford important subjects for editorial comment.

The principles of finance are given in various textbooks, but their practical application can be made only through knowledge of causes which change from day to day and which are recorded in current publications. The same may be said of the politics of the day.

Almost all young men like to write about sporting contests because they are interested and because they enjoy seeing the game. The public demand for superior sporting news has compelled the printing of from one to three pages of it daily, and the good sporting writer is usually in demand. It is not difficult to catch the knack of writing for the sporting page, but thorough technical knowledge is required. Interest in sporting contests seems to be increasing of late years. They must for a long time to come consume much newspaper space.

Also, young writers usually are ambitious to pen theatrical criticism. They are interested in the theaters and like to attend them. But this work is given to

men of experience, as a rule. The field is limited, the number of dramatic critics required is very few, and for various reasons the post when attained is of precarious permanency.

The writing of book reviews is commonly an early ambition of the college graduate especially. It fascinates with its promise of literary research under the soft glow of the student lamp, the welcome warmth of the cushion study chair, and the silent inspiration of dusky volumes on the library shelves. And delightfully clean and interesting work it is, to be sure, well worthy any student's quest. Many newspapers print a literary supplement once a week and it busies many pens. Usually it is under the direction of an editor whose exclusive task is to provide the matter for its columns. A large proportion of the new books sent for review are given out to members of the editorial or writing staff whose attention to them is in the nature of extra work; but some are sent to persons outside the office. The labors of the literary editor of a big city journal are constant and exacting for nearly every book published is sent to him and they are numbered in thousands. He has to provide for special articles on literary topics, also, for answers to correspondents, and he has to prepare for printing proper announcements of forthcoming publications which he sifts from a mass of matter furnished by publishers. Very many books are sent to the daily newspapers in the smaller cities, attention to which is usually divided among various members of the staff.

The general writer on a staff seldom acquires more than a general knowledge of the topic he is writing of; the specialist has expert knowledge, and often it is sought to his very great advantage by business or other outside interests. In these hustling times the expert in almost any line of study finds himself in demand.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ACTIVITIES AND PATRIOTIC SERVICE OF NEWSPAPERS IN TIMES OF WAR

THE war correspondent is perhaps the most picturesque figure in journalism. He endures the dangers and the hardships of war as does the soldier, possibly more so, for no one looks out for him in the field or especially cares how he fares. He has some glorious moments; but for the most part his time is consumed in heart-breaking effort to overcome obstacles. His reputation depends on his success in dealing with these difficulties.

The reporting of other wars was easy compared with the late World War. In the South African campaign, for example, the London newspapers were permitted to send as many correspondents as they chose and they went when and where they pleased. The London *Daily Mail* had thirty-six men there with a staff editor in command—the other London newspapers about the same number each. And all were competing in hustle and grab to get news and flash it to the home office. With little censorship and no restriction the reporting of that war was not difficult. And this was

true of nearly all war reporting up to the conflict between Turkey and the Balkans in 1912.

But the great war, 1914-1918, was started with almost as much hostility toward the correspondent as toward the enemy. As though by common consent, all the conflicting nations sought to crush him. Every big newspaper in all the world wanted to send a correspondent to the firing lines: some of them wanted to send two, four, six, even more, for the line of battle soon became more than a hundred miles long in France and much longer on the Russian frontier. At first not any were permitted to approach the firing front or even the division headquarters and the correspondents worked under great disadvantage. A strict censorship was made over the little information they were able to obtain. It was very unsatisfactory. At this time London was almost entirely without information about the war. The solemn silence with reference to the armies and the fighting served to dampen enthusiasm and patriotic ardor. Calls for enlistments were ignored, recruiting came to a standstill. Lists of the dead began to appear, adding to the gloom. No stirring descriptions of personal heroism or glorious achievement were printed. The newspapers made a great row about it and the people joined in.

It was not until later, when the papers were permitted to print stirring news from the front of the ebb and flow of the battle tides, that enthusiasm was aroused and England made splendid response to the call for fighting men. The government at length came to appreciate

that to suppress all war news was to breed indifference; and in the same proportion as the censorship was relaxed, public spirit was aroused.

All of the London newspapers made the most elaborate preparations to report the war. Those of the *Times* were perhaps the most comprehensive and may serve as illustration. It sent ninety correspondents to the army fronts scattering them all along the lines. They were, in the main, high priced men and the expenditure amounted to something like fifteen thousand dollars a week. But the censors shut them out entirely. They were not allowed within miles of the fighting lines and were forbidden to send a scrap of news. It was useless to keep them there and they were recalled. The only news printed in London, Paris, or Berlin, at first, were the government reports.

It was in response to public clamor for more news that a new plan of war reporting was adopted, namely, the syndicating of news. Very few correspondents were permitted on the firing line and each man represented a number of newspapers. In 1918, for example, as many as eight or ten English newspapers shared the work of one man. Reuter's agency had a man at all fronts. His reports went to all newspapers. This was a great service and also a great saving to the smaller sheets; but the big newspapers wanted their own men to do their work.

In London, a combination of all the daily papers was formed, called the Newspaper Proprietors Association, and it made virtually all arrangements for reporting

the war. If a member had in mind a good thing to do he was required by the arrangement to tell it to all the others, for nothing could be done except under this coöperative scheme. These conditions destroyed all competition. Newspaper "beats" disappeared. It was a very unsatisfactory arrangement. There was no freedom of movement for individual publications. And it is more than likely that a similar system will prevail in future wars. No room, no facilities for several hundred correspondents are to be had at the field headquarters of a fighting army. The number must be restricted and the news passed around to all newspapers.

In the latter months of the war, conditions, as compared with the first months, were reversed. Censorship was relaxed somewhat and correspondents were allowed to approach the battle lines with greater freedom. The syndicating plan was not changed. It worked more smoothly as the writers had more liberty but it was not ever satisfactory to the newspapers. The feeling of resentment toward the presence of correspondents in the field somewhat passed away. The writers who kept faith and observed the censorship rules were made more welcome. But army officers never have been reconciled to the presence of correspondents and doubtless never will be.

It was difficult for the newspapers to obtain quick news of the war for reasons already mentioned, yet, reviewing the months of the conflict, it is difficult to recall any serious misrepresentation of facts or conditions. We understood always, with substantial ac-

curacy, how many men each power had in the field, where the armies were gathered, what the losses were, what advantages had been gained or surrendered, and substantially how things were going.

The war was not reported with especial brilliancy until just before its end. In the closing months some very fine work was done, but until then dull routine narration was the vogue. Censorship, the syndicate requirement, the never ceasing congestion of the wires, the compelled reduction in the size of newspapers, were the chief causes for the moderation. A correspondent who knows that his matter is to be cut and slashed two or three times by censors before it reaches his editor loses much of the inspiration to brilliant work.

For the first time in any war, correspondents were compelled to wear a uniform—the ordinary officers' uniform without any mark or rank, but with a green brassard around the left upper arm. Each correspondent was compelled to provide himself with everything needed in the field including his transport which meant motor car and horses. It has been estimated that the correspondent's expenses were about eight hundred dollars a month. The correspondents were paid from four thousand to ten thousand dollars a year salary, three or four of especial reputation getting more than the latter sum.

The war involved vast additional expense to newspapers. The cost of maintaining men in the field and in news centers, the cost of transmitting dispatches, especially through the cables, as well as the enormously

increased price of every product that entered into newspaper construction helped to swell the total. The increase in the price of printing paper alone cost our newspapers of large circulation an additional eight hundred thousand dollars or nine hundred thousand dollars a year. Instead of paying from seven to ten cents a word for cable transmission, as before the war, the press paid latterly twenty-five to thirty-five cents from London and Paris. Some papers paid as much as one thousand dollars for single dispatches and frequently expended ten thousand dollars a week for the transmission of war reports. In the Gallipoli drive, messages were sent to Constantinople by automobile, thence wired to Vienna, relayed to Berlin, relayed again to The Hague and again to London, whence cabled to America at a total cost of about a dollar and a half a word. Yet we failed to note any relaxation of effort or of expense on the part of American newspapers to get the news. It is an axiom of the business that the very life of the sheet depends on a lavish expenditure for the purchase of information. The big newspapers were compelled to have special correspondents in all the big centers of allied, belligerent and neutral countries, to cover the political situation and other things arising from the administrative state of the war. For example, Holland was the center of German news, being on the frontier and on the main route. Here, naturally, a man obtained the big German news first of all, the German newspapers, the narratives of persons passing from Germany. Switzerland was a news center of almost

equal importance for the same reasons. Sweden and Norway had to be covered. It was very trying for the newspapers, very expensive.

In reporting the great war the newspapers were under great disadvantage in consequence of the censorship. It was the more exacting in the European cities, for there it included the censorship of comment as well as news; but much more important war news was permitted to pass through the Atlantic cables than was permitted to be published in London, Paris, or Berlin. Nevertheless, every cable message, every mail letter to America was carefully scrutinized. The letters found objectionable were destroyed; the cables were changed or suppressed at the censor's will. Dispatches from Paris to America by the way of London were censored in Paris and again in London and also on arrival in America. Messages from Vienna were censored in that city, in Berlin, in London and again in America. But with our entrance into the war all messages from Germany and Austria ceased, practically. At the time Servia was crushed, American correspondents telegraphed some fifteen thousand words describing the conquest, not one word of which reached New York. The reports reached London and were held there because thought to be news damaging to the cause of the allies. An American correspondent early in the war sent four reports of the Champagne advance. One third of one of them was delivered. Other correspondents had the same experience at this time.

In justification of censorship and in appeal to the

press for its aid, the War College in Washington, in the late war, cited instances of mischief done in other campaigns. In the Crimean War the English newspapers gave the Russians most valuable information about the nature of the trenches and the condition of the armies. Wellington complained that the English press gave to Napoleon full details of his troops and movements. The result of the battle of Sadowa, in the Austro-Prussian War, was largely determined by a report in the London *Times* which told that the Austrians were encamped on the right bank of the Elbe. Napoleon's letters from St. Helena attested that he kept accurate track of the movements of the English fleets and armies by London newspaper reports. The English had always given him credit for a crafty spy system, not appreciating that the letters of English officers which filled the newspapers, were a part source of his information. In the Franco-Prussian War the French journals gave the Prussians full particulars of McMahon's concentration at Châlons, his march to Rheims, and his advance to the Meuse. The Prussians so directed their army movements that the French surrender at Sedan was forced. The advance of the French army for the relief of Bazine at Metz, the success of which depended on secrecy, became known to the Prussians through the French and English newspapers. In our own Civil War, General Sherman's famous march through Georgia to the sea was largely directed by newspaper reports and by President Jefferson Davis's speeches explaining how Sherman was to be cut off,

which were printed in the Southern press. And the War Office warning told how in the Spanish-American War of 1898, the success of the American expedition that concentrated at Tampa was seriously menaced. Every military movement was reported in our newspapers and the Spanish Government had within a few hours complete accounts of the American preparations for war.

The War Office document made observations on the influence of the press in times of war in the following fashion:

> The press, powerful in peace, may become more so in war. By its editorials and presentation of news it may sway the people for or against the war, and thus stimulate recruiting and hearten and encourage the fighting forces in their work, or, by adverse criticism, may tend to destroy the efficiency of these agencies.
>
> It may by publishing names of organizations, numbers, movements, accounts of victories or defeats, furnish information to the enemy that will enable him to deduce the strength and location and intended movements of our own troops.
>
> By criticism of the conduct of campaigns, the action of certain officers or exploiting others, the people will be led to lose confidence in the army with the result that the moral support of the people is lost; they cry for and obtain new generals and new plans of campaign, not based on expert knowledge and thought with a consequent lengthening of the war or even defeat.

War has added greatly to our information about foreign countries. We studied their geography as we followed their armies, their history as we became inter-

ested in various regions. We have come to know of their resources, their products, their agricultural and their financial condition. Every day for more than four years, in hundreds of newspapers' columns, we read of their statesmen, their generals, admirals, soldiers, sailors, their people, their purpose, their patriotism, and their courage. We know of their cabinets and their parliaments as never before, their industrial troubles, their petty politics as well as those larger problems that require diplomatic interference. The war brought us into a new intimacy with almost all the nations of the globe. It incubated hundreds of new problems.

It must be quite impossible for the public to appreciate the patriotic assistance and the pecuniary sacrifice of the newspapers in the war. They surrendered hundreds of pages to appeals for aid, to arousing interest, to patriotic propaganda. Let us glance at the work of a single sheet:

Mr. William H. Field of the Chicago *Tribune* attested (April, 1918) that at that time his newspaper was devoting fifty per cent of its space, other than advertising, to matters concerning the war. In response to the question, "What can we do to help win the war?" it was decided to serve patriotic purposes both practical and inspirational. Mr. Field said:

> In the Sunday edition, fiction section, we print at least one patriotic story. The pictorial supplement contains war photographs and portraits of military leaders.
>
> The woman's department is devoted largely to war service. One section is given to the work of the Red Cross and

especially to its needs. We give scientific and practical information about food and preach economy and conservation in cooking and urge coöperation with the Food Administrator.

We advocate the making of war gardens and give explicit directions.

We have a Camp Stories contest in which we encourage soldiers to send short stories of camp life.

We print one page of signed editorials on the war. The idea of the page is to give articles such as may be found in magazines of the caliber of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Yale Review*, the *North American Review* and the *New Republic*.

On the club page we have one article and picture from the Woman's Committee of the State Council of National Defense.

Under the heading "Woman in War Time" we report the activities of the various patriotic women's organizations.

A three or four thousand word letter of society gossip has been a feature for many years. I find in the last one fifteen hundred words devoted to the work of the Woman's Committee on the Liberty Loan campaign, one hundred words on war talk at one of the clubs, five hundred on the entertainment of soldiers and sailors, five hundred words to the Woman's Land Army, three hundred words on the work of women in munitions factories, five hundred to appeals for war donations from New York committees, and three hundred words on a sale of Easter cards for the benefit of the wounded. This one article, indexed as "Society Letter" is one hundred per cent war propaganda. The only feature section not contributing to war material is the comic section.

What has been true of the Chicago *Tribune* was true also of nearly all the important newspapers of the United States. Nothing was permitted to come before the most insignificant bit of war information. The

newspapers made all news subordinate to war news. Day after day no other intelligence than war news appeared on the first page of our metropolitan sheets. With glowing patriotism they surrendered column after column to appeals for help for Belgium and for scores of other charities growing out of the war, and not in all the long years did they cease to print appeals. Through the coöperation of the newspapers millions on millions were raised before we entered the war. Then began renewed efforts to help the Red Cross, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Knights of Columbus and kindred organizations. And in still greater patriotic endeavor the press of America urged support of the Liberty Loans and the thrift stamp movements.

The newspapers spoke for the national government. They printed the government appeals. They counted not the cost to themselves although every additional page meant hundreds if not thousands of dollars in additional expense. In no other way could the government so quickly reach the people. The President's appeal to public sentiment, the treasury's call for financial aid, the plans for taxation, the demands for conservation of food and resources, the thousand and one suggestions to the people were all before the people in less than twenty-four hours in every city of this broad land. Through the press, the government could almost instantly communicate its wishes to more than three-quarters of the people. Yet the attitude of the government, and especially of Congress, was that of antagonism to the press and in some directions almost of hostility.

CHAPTER XIV

NEWSPAPER HISTORY—THE MODERN NEWSPAPER

The young man contemplating journalism may be interested in the beginnings of the business. The little known about them is abundantly repeated in various histories. China seems to have been the pioneer at a time before the Christian era. But the records of those early years are hazy. It is known that the Peking *Gazette*, as the sheet now is called, has been in continuous publication since the year 618 and mention is made of the Peking *News* as being much older. News-sheets printed in the time of Julius Cæsar speak of their esteemed contemporaries published in China.

Before the invention of type and printing all communications intended for public consumption were written on papyrus sheets and were hanged in the market places, or were read to the people, or were circulated in various ways.

Fifty years before the coming of Christ, the Roman government sent out an official sheet for the information of its public servants, the army, and the people, and this publication was continued for many years. Latterly it was called *Acta Diurna* (Daily News) and it seems to have been exceedingly popular.

The public appetite for news and gossip appears to have been quite as voracious then as now. The newssheets were almost sensational in their telling of scandals, of murders, and the details of crime. There seems to have been little regard for the proprieties in those days, for we read in the *Acta Diurna* that "the funeral of Marcia was performed with greater pomp of images than attendance of mourners." Extracts from Cicero's speeches are given, and one commentator writes:

When Cicero was sent as governor to Cilica he asked a friend to send him the news of Rome. The friend employed scribes, the reporters of that day, to gather the information and prepare the letters. The man who wrote the first letters reported everything from the procedure of the Senate to the result of the latest gladiatorial contest. Cicero objected to his methods and complained that the letters contained items that he would not have bothered with when at home. What he wanted, he explains, was advance information to keep him in touch with the political movements of the time.

It was during the reign of the Cæsars that the newssheets were in full request. They were written in Latin, of course, and were marvels of the penman's art on papyrus; and they were expressed with an epigrammic terseness and a snap that might well be imitated to-day. Dr. Johnson translates a few of them in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as follows:

The Latin festivals were celebrated, a sacrifice performed on the Alban Mount, and a dole of fish distributed to the people.

A fire has happened on Mount Coelius; two trisulae and five houses were consumed and four damaged.

Demiphone, the famous pirate, who was taken by Licinus Nerva, a provincial lieutenant, was crucified.

The red standard was displayed at the Capitol and the Consuls obliged the youth who were enlisted for the Macedonian war to take a new oath in the Campus Martius.

The Aedile Tertinius fined the butchers for selling meat which had not been inspected by the market overseers. The fine is to be used to build a chapel for the temple of Tellus.

M. Tullius Cicero pleaded in defense of Cornelius Sylla, accused by Torquatus of being concerned in Catiline's conspiracy and gained his cause by a majority of five judges. The Tribunes of the Treasury were against the defendant. One of the Praetors advertised by an edict that he should put off his sittings for five days on account of his daughter's marriage.

A report was brought to Tertinius, the praetor, while he was trying cases at his tribunal, that his son was dead. This was contrived by the friends of Coponius, who was accused of poisoning, that the praetor might adjourn the court; but the magistrate having discovered the falsity of the story, returned to his tribunal and continued in taking information against the accused.

After Cæsar's time the Roman sheets gradually disappeared and newspaper history becomes very misty. News publications reappeared, however, in Vienna and in Augsburg in 1524 and Pendleton in his "Newspaper Reporting in Olden Time and To-day," after quoting Chalmers in his "Life of Ruddiman," observes:

But he admits that the first modern sheet of news appeared in Venice about the year 1536, that it was manuscript, and was read aloud in certain parts of the city—a

journal that proved a great attraction, for it was issued once a month only, and narrated in polished stirring words how the Venetians fared in their war against Turkey. The fee paid for reading this sheet in manuscript was a gazzetta, and the news-sheet gradually got the name of the coin (*The Gazette*). At least Blount, in his Glossographia published in the seventeenth century, would lead on to this conclusion, giving as the definition of the word gazzetta, "A certain Venetian coin scarce worth one farthing; also a bill of news or short relations of the occurrences of the times, printed most commonly at Venice, and thence dispersed every month in most parts of Christendom." It was not until 1612 that the gazzettas of the Venetians first appeared as numbered sheets but some years previously the thirst for news—now well-nigh unquenchable in every civilized part of the globe—had spread to England.

All through the Middle Ages the news-letters were restrained both by church and state. The privilege of printing them was withdrawn, and by the year 1500 they virtually had ceased to exist. When they reappeared they were under strict government direction and censorship. The use of movable type and the printing press now facilitated their production, but all authority frowned on them save that authority which made use of them for its own ends.

The newspaper censorship of the next one hundred and fifty years was the severest ever known. Lord Burleigh, who was Prime Minister in Queen Elizabeth's reign, seems, however, to have understood the value of publicity—understood that a handful of facts is worth a hatful of rumors when it comes to influencing the

people. The appearance of the Spanish Armada in 1588, with its one hundred and twenty-nine ships, its twenty thousand soldiers and its ten thousand sailors, bent on the invasion of England, had long been looked for, and on its approach the people were overcome with hysterical excitement. But Burleigh had a news-letter printed from day to day telling the exact facts of the situation and the panic subsided.

Dr. James Melvin Lee, head of the Department of Journalism in New York University, believes that the first newspaper to be printed in the English language was published in Amsterdam, December 2, 1620, and in proof of his belief he produces a facsimile of the sheet. It was half sheet folio and had no title. A descriptive of the battle of Weissenberg was its chief feature.

In a discussion as to the early use of the word "reporter," Mr. Henry N. Cary, a New York journalist, quotes from a pamphlet of 1613 of which the title is:

The Wonders of this windie winter, by terrible stormes and tempests, to the losse of lives and goods of many thousands of men women and children. The like by Sea and Land hath not been seene nor heard of in this age of the world. London. Printed by G. Eld for John Wright, and are to be sold at his shop neer Christ-church dore.

In this pamphlet is the following:

Ships were perishing to the number of a hundred, and forty seafaring men, besides other passengers, both of men and women which at that time made their watery graves in the deep sea. This first strooke feare into the hearts of

people, which hath since seconded with many calamities, which lieth heavily upon the heart of the reporter.

The details of this storm's destruction are far less interesting to us than is the way they circulated the news in 1613 when there were no newspapers.

For the next one hundred years the news-sheet was the chief source of information to the English people. A few weekly newspapers were started, the first being edited by Nathaniel Butter, in 1622. It was called the *Weekly News*, but it seems to have had few readers. The people stuck to the news-sheets in which they had confidence. Possibly they did not credit Butter's yarns. Pendleton quotes two of them as specimens of seventeenth century journalism:

A true relation of the strange appearance of a man-fish about three miles within the river Thames, having a musket in one hand and a petition in the other, credibly reported by six sailors who both saw and talked with the monster.

A perfect mermaid was by the last great wind driven ashore near Greenwich, with her comb in one hand and her looking-glass in the other. She seemed to be of the countenancy of a most fair and beautiful woman, with her arms crossed, weeping out many pearly drops of salt tears; and afterwards she, gently turning herself upon her back again, swam away without being seen again any more.

Later in the century the use of the news-sheet became so general as to clog the mails. Macaulay writes interestingly of the disseminating of information in those days:

In 1685 nothing like the London daily paper of our time existed or could exist. Neither the necessary capital nor the necessary skill was to be found. Freedom too was wanting, a want as fatal as that of either capital or skill. During the great battle of the Exclusion Bill, many newspapers were suffered to appear. None of them was published oftener than twice a week. None exceeded in size a single small leaf. The quantity of matter which one of them contained in a year was not more than is often found in two numbers of the *Times*. After the defeat of the Whigs, it was no longer necessary for the King to be sparing in the use of that which all his Judges had pronounced to be his undoubted prerogative. At the close of his reign no newspaper was suffered to appear without his allowance; and his allowance was given exclusively to the London *Gazette*. The London *Gazette* came out only on Mondays and Thursdays. The contents were generally a royal proclamation, two or three Tory addresses, notices of two or three promotions, an account of a skirmish between the imperial troops and the Janissaries on the Danube, a description of a highwayman, an announcement of a grand cockfight between two persons of honor, and an advertisement offering a reward for a strayed dog. The whole made up two pages of moderate size. . . . The most important parliamentary debates, the most important state trials, recorded in our history, were passed over in profound silence. In the capital the coffee houses supplied in some measure the place of a journal. Thither the Londoners flocked as the Athenians of old flocked to the market place, to hear whether there was any news. There men might learn how brutally a Whig had been treated the day before in Westminster Hall, what horrible accounts the letters from Edinburg gave of the torturing of Covenanters, how grossly the Navy Board had cheated the crown in the victualling of the fleet, and what grave charges the Lord Privy Seal had

brought against the Treasury in the matter of the hearth money. But people that lived at a distance from the great theatre of political contention could be kept informed of what was passing there only by means of news-letters. To prepare such letters became a calling in London. The news-writer rambled from coffee room to coffee room collecting reports, squeezed himself into the Sessions House of the Old Bailey if there was an interesting trial, nay perhaps obtained admission to the Gallery of Whitehall and noticed how the King and Duke looked. In this way he gathered materials for weekly epistles destined to enlighten some country town or some bench of rustic magistrates.

Such were the sources from which the inhabitants of the largest provincial cities and the great body of the gentry and clergy learned almost all they knew of the history of their own times.

We must suppose that at Cambridge there were as many persons curious to know what was passing in the world as at almost any other place in the kingdom out of London. Yet at Cambridge during a great part of the reign of Charles II, the Doctors of Laws and the Masters of Arts had no regular supply of news except the London *Gazette*. At length the services of one of the collectors of intelligence in the capital were employed. It was a memorable day on which the first news-letter from London was laid on the table of the only coffee house room in Cambridge.

At the seat of a man of fortune in the country the news-letter was impatiently expected. Within a week after it had arrived it had been thumbed by twenty families. It furnished the neighboring squires with matter for talk over their October, and the neighboring rectors with topics for sharp sermons against Whiggery and Popery.

It is scarcely necessary to say that there were then no provincial newspapers. Indeed except at the capital and at the two Universities there was scarcely a printer in the kingdom. . .

This was the condition of the newspaper business at the end of the reign of King Charles II.—a period distinguished by less interest in literature and study than any period of England's history after the Elizabethan revival of learning. The reading of books and the search for information had been abandoned in the quest for pleasure. The people had joined in imitating the profligacy, the licentiousness and the revels of Charles's court. They who champion the newspaper as a great uplifting influence in community might instance these profligate days in which there were no newspapers and compare them with later years.

But the opening of the eighteenth century brought fresh impetus to study and a new interest in literature. Several weekly newspapers had been set going. The first daily newspaper was started in London in 1702. It was called the *Courant*. It was a small single-sheet publication printed on one side only, and it gave but a meager assortment of news items. It refrained from expressing opinions, the editor saying that "he would give no comments of his own as he assumed that people had sense enough to make reflections for themselves." Scores of editors even to the present day have launched initial numbers of their editions with this same resolution, expressed in the same way, but somehow it does not last long.

Then came the *Review* founded by Defoe, and Richard Steele's *Tatler* and the *Spectator* by Steele and Joseph Addison, which publications mark the real beginnings of journalism. By this time Pope and Swift, William Walsh, whom Dryden praised as a great critic, and

Arthur Maynwaring and others of the famous Kit Cat Club were writing for the periodicals.

Editorial comment, or the expression of editorial opinion seems to have had no place in newspapers until toward the close of the reign of King Charles II. Then, while the London *Gazette*, appearing under government direction, was printing news only, Sir Roger Lestrange was permitted to print a journal of comment without news, called the *Observator*. Lestrange had been a Tory pamphleteer, and for a short time had edited small news-sheets and under the government. He had been Surveyor of Printing Offices and Licensor of the Press. The *Observator* was ferociously against the Whigs and the Protestants. Because editorial comment was new, it focused much attention. Here was the first editor to write violent political editorial articles. He confined his subjects to politics and to religion which was then a part of the politics of the day. He inspired a host of imitators and the leading article, of which he was the parent, has been the leading feature of all journalism ever since. Great in its political use, immediately after him, were Dean Swift in his *Examiner*, and Daniel Defoe in the *Review* which he started in 1704 while in jail for political offense.

It was just at the beginning of the eighteenth century that Steele and Addison began their *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Their first impulse was to write of politics, for Steele was alive with political zeal and Addison was interested; but presently they seemingly sensed the opportunity for success in the new direction of a

publication given to the elucidation and the discussion of general topics, of subjects on which politics was unlikely to produce diversion of opinion—social life, playhouse criticism, literature, morals, ethics and personal conduct. The *Spectator* was printed daily. To the policy of minimizing politics and exalting general topics of interest it adhered.

Newspapers and periodicals increased rapidly after this time. Henry Fielding, the novelist, was editor of the *True Patriot* in 1745 and the *Jacobite Journal* in 1747. Dr. Samuel Johnson started the *Rambler* in 1750 and the *Idler* in 1758. In 1714, eleven papers were appearing in London. In 1733, the number had increased to eighteen and in 1776, to fifty-three.

John Wilkes in his newspaper the *North Briton* accused the king of lying in his address at the opening of Parliament in 1762, for which Wilkes was committed to the tower and expelled from the house, of which he had been a member.

Oliver Goldsmith wrote his delightful letters from "A Citizen of the World" for the *Public Ledger*. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Hazlitt and John Campbell were writers for the *Morning Chronicle*.

And in after years, contributing to the London *Times* at one period or another as writers, were: Beaconsfield, Lord Chancellor Brougham, Cardinal Newman, Lord Grey, Lord Macaulay, Sir William Harcourt, Moore, Dean Stanley, Lord Sherbrook, and Dr. Groley.

The constant and consistent progress of the newspaper since its feeble beginnings, and especially its de-

velopment in the last two hundred years, attest its importance to mankind. Rarely, indeed, has progress been more deliberate; rarely has it been more substantial. Long years of experience with it have tested and verified the newspaper's usefulness.

Thirst for news and for information has always prevailed and newspaper progress undoubtedly must have taken a vigorous spurt with the invention of type and printing but for the reason that both church and state joined in its repression. In 1685, at the close of the reign of King Charles II. there were in all England two newspapers only, worthy of the name, and both of them were under the strict supervision of the royal censor.

The first real jump in newspaper progress came with the relaxation of government repression just after the year 1700. It was then that Addison, Steele, Defoe, Fielding, Swift and Dr. Johnson, gave the real beginnings to journalism. Thereafter, for a hundred and fifty years, the advance and improvement in the making of newspapers were deliberate and irresistible. From chatterers and gossipers only the journals came gradually to be leaders of thought and of public opinion and circulators of essential information. But the change in them was so slow as to be almost unnoticed from year to year.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, came the invention of the modern printing press which permits the printing of a newspaper of thirty-five pages or more at the rate of thirty thousand or more copies an hour; the invention of the stereotyping process by

which newspaper pages may be duplicated to indefinite numbers, in solid metal, and used on an indefinite number of presses in the printing of a single edition; and the invention of the typesetting machine by which type may be cast and placed with something like six times the speed of the old-time process of hand composition. They were marvelous inventions.

These inventions removed mechanical difficulties that had confined the size and restricted the circulation of newspapers, and great changes came quickly. Heretofore the newspapers had been restricted to eight pages and many of them printed four pages only; but immediately twenty and twenty-four page editions appeared and thirty-five and forty page ones are common now. This great increase in volume permitted a like increase in scope and we now see in the newspapers a mass of information on an innumerable number of topics. Moreover, all changes in national or social life bring changes in newspapers. Big business brought big newspapers, as soon as they could be made.

Greatly increased newspaper importance has followed this expansion. It is possible to present great events with a fullness of detail and an attention to side issues hitherto unknown. A senator's attack on the Administration may be printed in full—six or seven columns of it. An investigation involving the conduct of the war may be reported question and answer verbatim. Pages are devoted to a catastrophe like the blowing up of Halifax that a few years ago would have been described in as many columns. Scores of special articles are

printed the like of which never had found place in the daily newspaper. And in the evening sheets, especially, are department features intended to interest women and children, funny picture series, puzzles, medical information, screeds, and freak features—all of which emphasize the very great change from comparatively a few years ago. And every change from the beginning has been in the direction of progress, has made the newspaper a greater and a better product, has given to it the increased confidence of the public. Confidence in a production of any sort usually is withheld until experience has tested and verified it. The value and the importance of the newspaper have come to be firmly established.

Many persons do not require the services of a lawyer. Many rarely employ a physician. Thousands seldom listen to a clergyman. But in these wide-awake days everybody of any account must read the newspaper, for the reading of the newspaper has come to be absolutely essential to the daily routine of every intelligent person. The things we read in the morning newspaper are the things we talk about during the day. If you are interested in politics, or if you are interested in finance, or the fluctuations of prices, or the movements of society, or any phase of trade or commerce, or in any of the vital questions of the hour—for all of these you turn to the newspaper. The things taught in the colleges are the things of the past, or the principles that experience has tested and verified. The things taught by the newspapers are the things of the present. You

cannot learn politics from a textbook. You must absorb the politics of the day by a study of the events of the day. Your financial policy must be governed by existing monetary conditions rather than by conclusions drawn from the panic of 1873 or that of 1907. The events of the day, the progress of the day, are of more importance to the man in business life or the man in social life than any other consideration. The newspaper is his great source of inspiration and instruction. The newspaper informs you, instructs you, influences you, amuses you, inspires you, directs your thoughts, assists your conclusions, fires your ambitions, enlarges your vocabulary—all of which are of the utmost importance to you. It may be said, therefore, with confident complacency that the profession of journalism rests on the solid foundation of supplying an essential need.

In a lecture before the students of Dartmouth College, Mr. John Lee Mahin said:

> The family that pays a cent or two for its big morning newspaper receives a carefully digested review of the political, economic, social and commercial activities of the entire world for the previous twenty-four hours. Probably five hundred men in New York City would pay a thousand dollars a year each for the commercial information alone that they receive from the New York *Times* if they could not obtain it in any other way.

In considering these changes it should be remembered that the journalism of fifty years ago was conspicuous for the reason that a famous bunch of editors stamped

their personality on almost every column. It was the period of personal journalism. These editors were inspired by the tragedies and the ferocities of the Civil War and by the magnitude and the political importance of events involving as they believed the very life of the nation. They were made conspicuous by the very greatness of the causes that moved their minds and their pens. They were stimulated to the limit of mental exaltation in what they wrote. The country was surging with excitement. Part of the people were clamoring for peace on any terms. Others insisted on fighting the war to a finish at any cost of life or money. Still others were for compromise. It is hardly possible for generations of to-day to appreciate how intensely the war agitated the people. The editors fought each other with a ferocity otherwise unknown in American journalism. They were the people's champions and their names were known in every household; and doubtless their names will live for years to come as the country's greatest editors.

Nevertheless, let it be said, in all truth, that we have to-day scores of editors equally capable of producing the crisp and pungent paragraphs as well as the profound editorial articles of Prentice, Greeley, Raymond, Dana, Bryant, Bowles, Watterson, Medill and Manton Marble. The personal journalism of that day was impetuous and impressive, but latterly and by degrees, in the big cities especially, "the supreme importance of the editor has been transformed into the supreme importance of the newspaper," and we hear less about the editor and more about the newspaper itself.

This effacement of individuality influences to exalt the newspaper and to exalt journalism as a profession. The greatly enlarged field has attracted thousands of most excellent writers, fine editors, conductors, and managers. News-gathering and news-presentation are now regarded as of supreme importance. Our pages bristle with specialties. Our Sunday editions are magazines of information. The great modern newspaper represents the product of the profession rather than the genius of a single writer.

It was not so fifty years ago. These men, whose names have come down to us, were great editorial writers rather than great editors of the entire newspaper. Aside from the editorial page their editions were devoid of genius. The news columns were slovenly in appearance and dull in narration. They lacked the cunning of embellishment with the flavor of literature and the charm of fiction. The book reviews, the critical articles were excellent—but the editors daubed dullness over everything else. The newspaper of that day is not to be compared with the newspaper of to-day in general excellence.

The editorial pages and the criticisms, however, were of high excellence. It was a literary era and the literary impulse was a conspicuous factor in public thought. Marble, Dana, Bryant, Curtis and others made reputations for literary excellence in journalistic work that would not to-day attract so much attention; for literary excellence, while commended and appreciated, is not so much insisted on, encouraged, or taught, as it was forty years ago.

The foreign correspondence of that day as printed in the newspapers consisted largely of descriptions of scenery and revelations of the writers' emotions while climbing to Alpine heights or floating by moonlight on the silent waters of Italian lakes. It was written mostly by staff members who were on vacation trips and who were inspired by the travel notes of Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne that had obtained great attention. The journals of fifty years ago did not maintain regular correspondents abroad. All first class important papers to-day have representatives in the capitals of Europe, but they do not write descriptions of scenery. Some of the foreign correspondence of that day was very good, however, notably that of Bayard Taylor for the New York *Tribune*.

The most conspicuous difference between the newspapers of 1850 or 1860 and those of to-day is in the treatment of news. Very little space was given then to really important events. The national convention that nominated a candidate for the presidency was reported in two columns or so, whereas to-day from three to six pages are required. A bare half column was given to the stock market. The commercial markets were equally pinched; two or three pages of matter are now devoted to them. There was no real estate department. The court calendars were not printed for the lawyers, nor the list of buyers in town for the merchants; nor was there a sporting page, or a woman's page, or a list of school teachers appointed, or of policemen transferred, or of firemen granted a leave of absence. The news was

presented in the most perfunctory and routine fashion, with no attempt to make it attractive or interesting. News collecting had not been systematized or especially studied, as to-day. The Associated Press was in its infancy, devoting itself almost entirely to congress proceedings and to market reports. Raw reporters were permitted to intersperse their own comments through what they wrote and their conclusions received little revision or supervision. Every line in the modern newspaper is revised by a copy reader editor and not a suggestion of reportorial opinion is permitted. The edition of fifty years ago was more or less subject to haphazard inexactitude and casual error.

The present-day newspaper is prepared with great care. Its ambitious articles are studied out. The errors in its news columns are the results of haste rather than ignorance—the haste compelled by necessity in getting to press on the minute. The Sunday edition supplements, devoted to general topics and to literature, are already taking the place of many kinds of literature. They print new fiction by popular authors. They exploit and expand the latest developments in science, art, music, medicine, mechanics, construction, transportation—indeed, anything that is new or important. They quickly transfer to their columns any important matter contained in a new book.

The reading of newspapers is immeasurably greater than the reading of any other kind of matter. The new book of which fifty thousand copies are sold is called very successful, of which one hundred thousand

are sold is pronounced a wonder, of which two hundred thousand are sold, phenomenal. Yet in New York City alone a million and a half newspapers are printed every morning and nearly two millions every afternoon. In America, millions of persons who do not read more than five books in a year read a newspaper or two every day.

And the newspaper of to-day is a better paper because it is more accurate of statement and more faithful to fact, and more fair-minded in the presentation of passing events. The long weary day of misrepresentation in news reports is drawing to its close. The chief events of the time are recorded with such fidelity to accuracy that in future years they must be accepted as historically correct. All decent newspapers now take pride in their accuracy of statement in the news columns and there is little intentional misrepresentation. In our political campaigns the attitude of each candidate is decently described and what he says is faithfully reported and made equally conspicuous. In this respect the newspapers have changed greatly within a few years.

Moreover, the collection of news has been greatly facilitated by increased telegraph and telephone and ocean cable efficiency. These agents give much better transmission, making communication with all parts of the world little short of instantaneous. Speaking of the benefits to the world secured through electricity, Mr. W. W. Harris said in a recent address:

> When the Norsemen were on their way to the discovery of America they had no compass; yet the compass had been

discovered by the Chinese many centuries before. But the news of the compass had not in all these centuries gotten half way around the world. And the science of navigation came not until that piece of news had made its way to the European world. To-day any important fact girdles the globe in a cable's flash.

The newspapers of to-day are better because more study and thought are put into their construction. Not only are the editorial writers men of education, but the sub-editors, the night editors, the revisers of copy and the reporters are mostly educated men—men who have been taught where to seek and how to find information, who have been taught to be confident and self-reliant and original. The proportion of college-bred men on newspaper staffs is much greater than it used to be, and the intelligence of the staffs has increased in the same proportion. The modern newspaper wants men of brains who know how to use their brains—men who can think rapidly and act instantly.

This unceasing, irresistible, cumulative progress is making newspapers more important, is making the profession of journalism more attractive. Even as years of experience and study and laborious patient application have perfected and solidified the practice of law and medicine, have made firm and substantial the developments of electricity and mechanics, and have solved the problems of transportation and great business, so the making of newspapers is settling down to a strong substantial basis.

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